Public Opinion Quarterly

Published for the American
Association for Public Opinion
Research by the University of
Chicago Press

RICHARD A. EASTERLIN and EILEEN M. CRIMMINS — Changes in the Values of American Youth

J. MICHAEL HOGAN and TED J. SMITH III — Public Opinion and the Nuclear Freeze

NORBERT SCHWARZ and others — Changes in the Meaning of Scale Labels

MICHAEL X. DELLI CARPINI and SCOTT KEETER — U.S. Public's Knowledge of Politics

FRANCIS J. YAMMARINO, STEVEN J. SKINNER, and TERRY L. CHILDERS — A Meta-analysis of Mail Surveys

RESEARCH NOTES — *J. Edwin Benton* and *John L. Daly* on "A Question Order Effect," *John R. Petrocik* on "Estimating Turnout," and *Richard Bolstein* on "Poll Response and Voting"

THE POLLS — Trends: Environmental Problems and Protection by *Riley E. Dunlap* and *Rik Scarce*

BOOKS — Reviews by *Robert L. Kahn*, *Kathleen A. Frankovic*, *James O'Reilly*, and *George Bishop*

Winter 1991

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PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 55 / WINTER 1991 / NUMBER 4

Articles

Private Materialism, Personal Self-fulfillment, Family Life, and Public Interest: The Nature, Effects, and Causes of Recent Changes in the Values of American Youth 499
RICHARD A. EASTERLIN and EILEEN M. CRIMMINS

Polling on the Issues: Public Opinion and the Nuclear Freeze 534
J. MICHAEL HOGAN and TED J. SMITH III

Rating Scales: Numeric Values May Change the Meaning of Scale Labels 570
NORBERT SCHWARZ, BÄRBEL KNÄUPER, HANS-J. HIPPLER, ELISABETH NOELLE-NEUMANN, and LESLIE CLARK

Stability and Change in the U.S. Public's Knowledge of Politics 583
MICHAEL X. DELLI CARPINI and SCOTT KEETER

Understanding Mail Survey Response Behavior: A Meta-analysis 613
FRANCIS J. YAMMARINO, STEVEN J. SKINNER, and TERRY L. CHILDERS

Research Notes

A Question Order Effect in a Local Government Survey 640
J. EDWIN BENTON and JOHN L. DALY

An Algorithm for Estimating Turnout as a Guide to Predicting Elections 643
JOHN R. PETROCIK

Comparison of the Likelihood to Vote among Preelection Poll Respondents and Nonrespondents 648
RICHARD BOLSTEIN

The Polls

Trends: Environmental Problems and Protection 651
RILEY E. DUNLAP and RIK SCARCE

Book Reviews

Robert K. Merton, Marjorie Fiske, and Patricia L. Kendall, *The Focused Interview: A Manual of Problems and Procedures* 673
ROBERT L. KAHN

Louise A. Tilly and Patricia Gurin, eds., *Women, Politics and Change* 675
KATHLEEN A. FRANKOVIC

Edward R. Tufte, *Envisioning Information* 677
JAMES O'REILLY

Shawn W. Rosenberg, *Reason, Ideology and Politics* 678
GEORGE BISHOP

Index to Volume 55, 1991 681

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PRIVATE MATERIALISM, PERSONAL SELF-FULFILLMENT, FAMILY LIFE, AND PUBLIC INTEREST

THE NATURE, EFFECTS, AND CAUSES OF RECENT CHANGES IN THE VALUES OF AMERICAN YOUTH

RICHARD A. EASTERLIN
EILEEN M. CRIMMINS

Abstract From the early seventies through 1986–87, private materialism as a life goal increased greatly in importance among American youth, goals relating to family life increased somewhat, public interest concerns diminished modestly, and the goal of personal self-fulfillment declined sharply. Accompanying this shift in values was a change in young people's college majors and career plans toward those leading to higher paying jobs and a marked increase in the attractiveness of working in large corporations. Jobs offering money and status became more preferred relative to those with opportunities for self-fulfillment or public service. Support grew for capitalist institutions such as profit making and advertising. At the same time, there was a retreat from political involvement, and a conservative shift in political beliefs. Explanations of the shift in values in terms of the impact on the young of major political and social events or the emergence of a feeling of economic insecurity among the young are

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 55:499–533 © 1991 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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not supported by the evidence. Nor are a number of hypotheses relating to changes in young people's family structure or socialization experience. The shift in values of the young does, however, apparently correspond to a similar change in the values of adults generally and, thus, may reflect changes in the values transmitted to young people as they were growing up. We speculate that the shift in values among adults was, in turn, caused by a growing feeling of economic deprivation in the post-1973 period as real wage rates declined and material aspirations continued to rise. In the last few years, the shift in the life goals of the young appears to have ended and may even have started to reverse, but young people today are still much different from those 15 years ago.

Although much has been written about the values of today's youth, there is little consensus even on the facts of recent trends. In studies published in the same year, Levine and Yankelovich reached diametrically opposed conclusions. Yankelovich, in an approach influenced by the Maslovian hierarchy-of-needs framework, asserted that personal self-fulfillment was increasingly coming to the fore (Maslow 1954; Yankelovich 1981). Levine, in an almost despairing paean, *When Dreams and Heroes Died*, saw a return to private materialism, along lines suggested by Altbach (Altbach 1974; Levine 1981).

These conflicting views echo the more general literature on changing values of the American population described by Hammond (1986). Hirschman (1982) and Schlesinger (1986) have claimed, like Levine, that there is an on-going shift from public concerns to private materialism. Bellah and his associates (1985) see, similar to Yankelovich, a growing emphasis on personal self-fulfillment. Inglehart (1977, 1981, 1985) is able to have the best of both worlds. Although he also sees through Maslovian eyes a long-term trend from materialism to postmaterialism (the latter embracing both public interest concerns and personal self-fulfillment), he allows for materialistic lapses from trend in periods of physical or economic insecurity.[1]

This article draws on two national sample surveys of American youth in an attempt to clarify: (1) the nature of recent trends in private materialism, personal self-fulfillment, family life, and public interest as life goals of American youth, (2) possible effects of these trends on the personal plans and attitudes of American youth, and (3) the causes of trends in life goals. As shall be seen, the evidence suggests a sharp shift toward private materialism from the seventies through 1986–87, with important effects on plans and attitudes. The causes of the shift

1. Indeed, Bellah and his associates (1985) too mention this possibility (p. 285), although they do not suggest that it is relevant to their period of study.

appear to be linked to the impact on the values of the American population generally of declining real wage rates and rising material aspirations in the post-1973 period.

Concepts, Data, and Measurement

CONCEPTS

Private materialism is taken here to mean the pursuit of one's own material well-being; family life, to mean those goals relating to family formation and welfare; public interest, to mean concerns for the welfare of the broader community; and personal self-fulfillment, to have to do with aspirations for personal development and self-actualization as in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As in the economic model of preferences, we view these goals as largely competitive with one another. Each person's time is limited, and the more time spent pursuing one goal, the less there is available to achieve others. Pursuit of personal gain is likely to mean giving up time that might have been devoted to societal concerns. Similarly, family goals, such as having children, may be sacrificed to enhance personal material well-being. This conception leads to interpreting life goal statements in a relative sense. Rather than looking at the importance of each goal singly, we are interested chiefly in the set of life goals. If the stated importance of goals A, B, and C remains unchanged but that of D increases sharply, then there has to have been a relative decline in the importance of A, B, and C.

DATA

The analysis uses data from two unusually valuable surveys: one of college freshmen, the other of high school seniors. The data on college freshmen are from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), which is an ongoing annual national survey conducted since 1965 that is now under the auspices of the University of California, Los Angeles, Higher Education Research Institute. We use data beginning in 1966 because the questionnaire format was better established by the second year. Each year the CIRP surveys more than 200,000 full-time students, constituting the entering freshman classes at approximately 550 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities across the United States. A subset of the data, amounting in 1985 to 192,000 cases, is weighted to provide a nationally representative sample of all first-time, full-time students entering institutions of higher education in the fall of each year (Astin, Green, and Korn 1987).

The data on high school seniors are from Monitoring the Future, a nationally representative survey of high school seniors that is remarkable for its scope and has been conducted annually beginning in 1975 by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1987; Johnston, Bachman, and O'Malley 1986). Again, we use data beginning in the second year of the survey, 1976, in order to maintain comparability over time in questionnaire design. While about sixteen thousand respondents are queried each year, the survey comprises five different questionnaires with only partially overlapping questions. Most of the variables of interest here were collected on only one of the five forms; thus, the sample size for each response is usually somewhat over three thousand students. The school drop-out rate has averaged a fairly constant 15–20 percent; hence, this survey covers about 80–85 percent of American youth (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1987, p. 3; U.S. Department of Education 1988, p. 54).

Because the wording or item order on the CIRP questionnaire was intermittently changed before 1974 and after 1986, the periods selected for the main part of the present analysis are 1974–86 for CIRP and 1976–86 for Monitoring the Future. In addition, available comparable data on the life goals are shown for the CIRP data for 1966–73 and for both surveys for 1987 through 1989. The cross-sectional analysis is based on data for 1985, the most recent year for which data tapes from both surveys are available.

A number of investigators involved in these surveys have produced valuable studies relevant to the present topic (Astin 1985, 1988; Bachman 1987; Bachman and Johnston 1979a, 1979b; Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1986; Green 1989; Green and Astin 1985; Herzog, Bachman, and Johnston 1978). Although their results are generally consistent with those presented here, the present study differs somewhat in conceptual framework, in covering a longer period of time, in adding cross-sectional data, and in fuller consideration of causes and effects of changing values. Also, this study differs from that of Hoge, Luna, and Miller (1981) in that it is based on nationally representative data rather than on data for a few colleges.

In addition, the present study differs from earlier ones in drawing on two sets of data for generalization. Although differences between CIRP and Monitoring the Future in the population sampled, the rating scale, the nature and wording of life goals, and the order of life goals prevent direct comparison of point-of-time responses, the availability of two data sets has the advantage of enabling one to check whether generalizations about patterns of association among life goals and trends over time are consistent between the two. Also, because the range of questions other than those on life goals differs between the surveys, their joint use permits a wider scope of inquiry than either would alone.

MEASUREMENT OF VALUES

Both surveys include quite similar questions probing respondents' life goals, and these questions contain individual life goal items that provide fairly direct counterparts of the four concepts of interest. These four "primary indicators" in each survey are the principal focus of the subsequent analysis; however, additional life goal items closely related to the primary indicators provide useful insights that strengthen and expand the interpretation of the data. Table 1 lists the primary and subsidiary indicators included here, classified according to their conceptual counterparts.

Nature of Life Goals and Their Trends

IMPORTANCE OF LIFE GOALS IN 1985

How important to American youth are the goals of private materialism, family life, personal self-fulfillment, and public interest? In 1985 among college freshmen, all of the goals except personal self-fulfillment evoke substantial support; 63–71 percent rate them as essential or very important (table 2*A*, col. 11). Personal self-fulfillment is seen as somewhat less important—the importance of developing a meaningful philosophy of life is placed in the top two categories by 43 percent of freshman.

Among high school seniors, all four goals are considered important, but their relative order is different from that for college freshmen (table 2*B*, col. 11). Personal self-fulfillment is a close second to the family goal, while private materialism and the public interest goal find somewhat less support. The differences between the surveys in ranking and level of support for the four goals are due chiefly to differences in the goals included, their wording, and order. Although the population of youths included among high school seniors is considerably greater and less homogeneous, this cannot account for the difference in ratings between the two groups in table 2, because the life goals of high school seniors with no college plans differ very little from those with college plans (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1987, pp. 36–38).

In general, then, among the goals specified in the two surveys, private materialism, family life, personal self-fulfillment, and the public interest all are quite important to American youth. However, those

Table I. Classification of Life Goals in the CIRP and Monitoring the Future Surveys

Life Goal	CIRP Survey	Monitoring the Future Survey
1. Private materialism	Being very well-off financially[a]	Having lots of money[a]
	Being successful in a business of my own	Being successful in my line of work
		Being able to find steady work
2. Family goals	Raising a family[a]	Having a good marriage and family life[a]
		Living close to parents and relatives
		Being able to give my children better opportunities than I've had
3. Personal self-fulfillment	Developing a meaningful philosophy of life[a]	Finding purpose and meaning in my life[a]
4. Public interest	Helping others who are in difficulty[a]	Making a contribution to society[a]
	Influencing the political structure	Being a leader in my community
	Influencing social values	Working to correct social and economic inequalities
	Participating in a community action program	
	Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	
	Helping to promote racial understanding	

NOTE.—In the CIRP survey the instruction is "Indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following," and the rating categories are "essential, very important, somewhat important, and not important." In the Monitoring the Future survey the instruction is "How important is each of the following to you in your life," and the rating categories are "not important, somewhat important, quite important, and extremely important." Seven items in the CIRP survery and four items from the Monitoring the Future survey are omitted because they were not considered indicators of the four concepts of interest.

[a] Taken as the principal indicator of the specified life goal in each survey.

Table 2. Life Goal Correlations ≥ .20, 1985

	A. College Freshmen										
Life Goal	Money[a] (1)	Own Business (2)	Family (3)	Philosophy of Life[a] (4)	Political Structure (5)	Societal Values (6)	Community Program (7)	Environmental Program (8)	Racial Understanding (9)	Helping Others[a] (10)	Percent, Top Two Ratings[b] (11)
Very well off financially[a]	. . .	.37									71
Successful in own business	.37	. . .									52
Raising a family[a]			. . .							.21	70
Developing a philosophy of life[a]				. . .	.26	.30	.38	.31	.37	.27	43
Influencing political structure				.26	. . .	.50	.30	.28	.29		16
Influencing societal values				.30	.50	. . .	.35	.26	.32	.33	33
Community program				.38	.30	.35	. . .	.42	.47	.38	23
Environmental program				.31	.28	.26	.42	. . .	.39	.26	20
Racial understanding				.37	.29	.32	.47	.39	. . .	.37	32
Helping others in difficulty[a]			.21	.27		.33	.38	.26	.37	. . .	63

Table 2 (*Continued*)

	B. High School Seniors										
	Money[a]	Success in Work	Steady Work	Good Marriage/ Family Life[a]	Live Close to Parents	Give Children Opportunities	Find Meaning/ Purpose in Life[a]	Leader in Community	Correct Inequalities	Contribute to Society[a]	Percent, Top Two Ratings[b]
Lots of money[a]	. . .										61
Success in work		. . .	.30			.20				.21	91
Find steady work		.30	. . .			.27					95
Good marriage/ family life[a]				. . .		.31					89
Live close to parents/relatives					. . .	.20					34
Give children better opportunities		.20	.27	.31	.20	. . .	.27	.21			86
Find purpose/ meaning in life[a]						.27	. . .		.25	.27	86
Being leader in community						.21		. . .	.33	.51	26
Correct societal/ economic inequalities							.25	.33	. . .	.37	32
Contribute to society[a]		.21					.27	.51	.37	. . .	55

SOURCE.—Micro-data tapes for 1985.

NOTE.—There are no negative correlations of .20 or less. In panel *A*, for each bivariate correlation, N = approximately 175,000; in panel *B*, N = approximately 3,250.

[a] Principal indicator (see table 1).

[b] In panel *A*, indicates rating of "essential" or "very important"; in panel *B*, "extremely important" or "quite important."

who rate one goal highly do not necessarily rate the others highly. This is clear from the correlation matrixes in table 2, where, to simplify interpretation, the entries are confined to correlations of .20 or greater, disregarding sign. Note that in both panels there is a virtual absence of correlations between the indicators of private materialism and those of the public interest. Clearly, those who rate one life goal highly usually do not rate the other highly, a result consistent with Hirschman's (1982) and Schlesinger's (1986) contrast between those with private versus public involvements. (This is not to say, of course, that there is an inverse relationship between the two.) In contrast, within the public interest groupings there are consistently high positive correlations among the indicators.

There are other notable consistencies between the two surveys. In both, those who consider personal self-fulfillment important are likely to consider the public interest important, but not private materialism. This is consistent with Inglehart's assimilation of self-actualization to a public interest orientation in his postmaterialist versus materialist groupings (Inglehart 1981, p. 892).

Also in both surveys, the family goal emerges as a distinct one, with only one case out of a possible six of a correlation at the .20 level or higher with the other three primary indicators. Because of the financial requirements of family life, one might have expected a noticeable positive correlation between the goals of family life and private materialism, but in neither survey is this true. This suggests that the goal of private materialism is interpreted by respondents primarily as goods for oneself, not for one's entire family. There is, however, a relationship between giving children better opportunities and the goals of steady work and being a success at work, suggesting that the latter goals may be chiefly seen as instrumental to successful family life, rather than linked to one's own material aspirations.

TRENDS IN LIFE GOALS

What of trends in the life goals of American youth? Again, the two surveys give quite similar results in the period in which they overlap, although the changes are more pronounced in the college freshmen data. The most sizable changes are a sharp increase in private materialism as a life goal and a decline in the importance of personal self-fulfillment (fig. 1). This shift appears to date from the early or mid-seventies, although precise dating is difficult because of uncertainties about the reliability of the pre-1974 data. Compared with private materialism and personal self-fulfillment, the public interest and family goals change more moderately. Among high school seniors both remain fairly constant in absolute magnitude. Among college freshmen

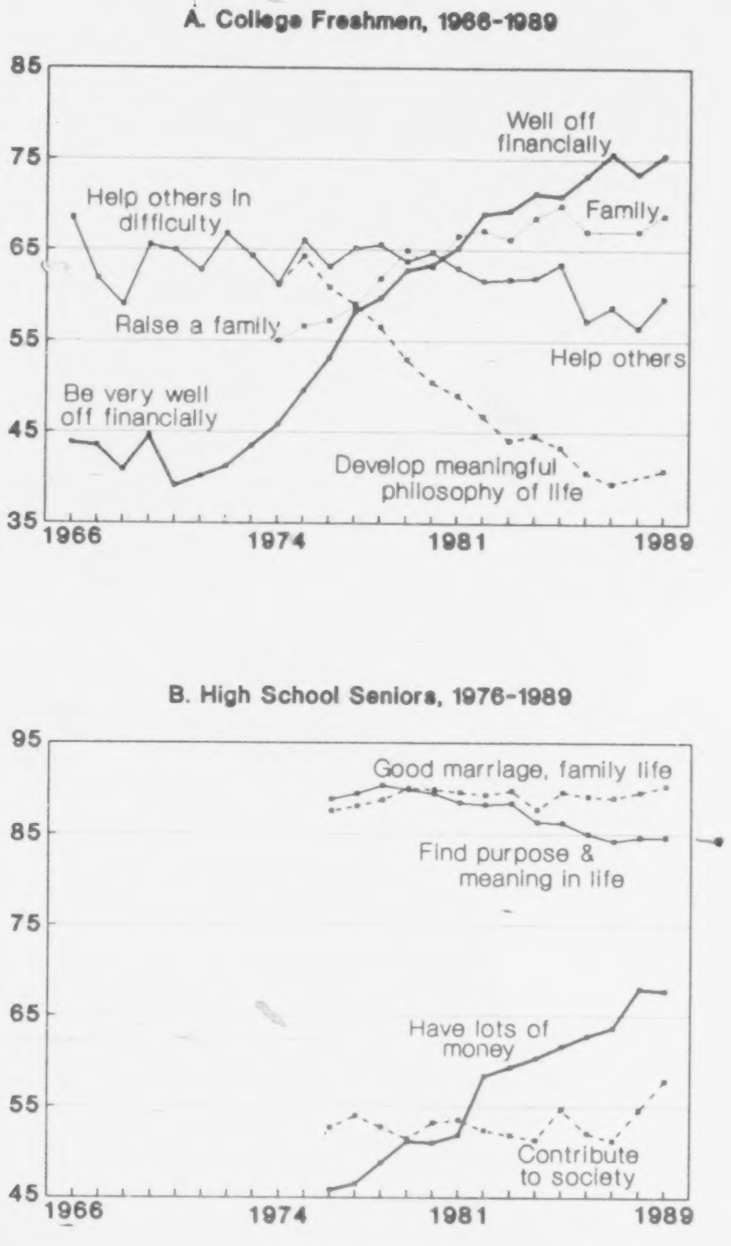

Figure 1. Life goals of college freshman and high school seniors. Source: See table 3. Because of format change, *A* data are omitted for "Raise a family" in 1987 and "Philosophy of life" in 1988.

the importance of family life increases and public interest declines slightly. In relative terms, however, these goals, as well as personal self-fulfillment, have diminished in importance.

This shift in goals appears to have ended in recent years. Particularly in the freshman data, but to some extent also in those for high school seniors, one sees a leveling off in the period starting around 1986–87. (Indeed, newly released freshmen data for 1990, taken together with those in fig. 1, hint at a possible reversal [see Astin, Korn, and Berz 1990].) This is an additional reason for focusing the trend analysis here on the period from the mid-seventies through 1986.

If the analysis is expanded to include the subsidiary as well as primary indicators of table 1, a clearer picture emerges of the trends through 1986 suggested by figure 1. Consider, for example, the parameters of simple least squares trend lines fitted to the time series for each life goal for the period from the mid-seventies to 1986 (table 3). Comparing average rates of change as measured by the slope coefficient, b, one finds a similar pattern in both surveys. Private materialism and family life goals increase in importance, with the specific goal of making money having by far the greatest rate of increase. In contrast, public interest concerns usually decrease in importance (though the trends are not always statistically significant), and personal self-fulfillment declines the most.

Within the public interest grouping, there is a similar and instructive pattern in both surveys among the subsidiary indicators. Public concerns relating to specific social objectives—promoting racial understanding, participating in community action or environmental programs, and correcting social and economic inequalities—have statistically significant negative trends of mild or moderate magnitude (rows 7–9, 19). Public concerns of a more general nature—influencing social values, influencing the political structure, and being a community leader—have positive (though not always significant) trends (rows 4, 5, 17). Our primary indicator in each survey, the importance rating of which is considerably greater than any of the subsidiary indicators (see table 2), falls between these two groupings, apparently averaging them in some degree. To the extent one emphasizes commitment to specific social objectives, there has seemingly been a turning away from the public interest, not only relative to private materialism and family life but in an absolute sense as well.

In both surveys the pattern in the trend results of the full set of survey items in table 3 is generally consistent with that in the cross-sectional analysis of table 2—those items that have sizable positive correlations cross-sectionally usually have similar directions of change. Thus items positively correlated with private materialism usually have significant positive trends, while those positively correlated

Table 3. OLS Regression Parameters for Importance of Specified Life Goal against Time

Population and Life Goal[a]	Percent. Top Two Ratings 1974	Percent. Top Two Ratings 1986	Regression Statistics b	Regression Statistics t	Regression Statistics $\bar{R}^2$
College freshmen (1974–86):					
Private materialism:					
1. Very well off financially[b]	46	73	2.19	14.1	.94
2. Successful in own business	38	49	.80	4.9	.66
Family life:					
3. Raising a family[b]	55	67	1.19	9.4	.88
Public interest:					
4. Influencing social values	27	33	.30	4.3	.59
5. Influencing political structure	13	15	.06	.9	.00
6. Helping others in difficulty[b]	61	57	−.34	−2.3	.26
7. Promoting racial understanding	36	27	−.61	−3.9	.62
8. Participating in community action program	28	19	−.82	−7.9	.84
9. Participating in environmental program	26	16	−.91	−6.5	.77
Personal self-fulfillment:					
10. Developing philosophy of life[b]	61	41	−1.98	−17.1	.96

High school seniors (1976–86):					
Private materialism:					
11. Lots of money[b]	46	63	1.84	14.1	.95
12. Success in work	88	91	.40	8.8	.88
13. Steady work	92	94	.37	5.6	.75
Family life:					
14. Live close parents/relatives	26	33	.81	6.3	.79
15. Give children better opportunities	83	88	.49	8.5	.88
16. Good marriage and family life[b]	88	89	.09	1.0	.00
Public interest:					
17. Being leader in community	21	28	.43	4.4	.65
18. Contribute to society[b]	53	52	−.04	−.3	.00
19. Correct social/economic inequalities	33	32	−.17	−2.0	.22
Personal self-fulfillment:					
20. Find purpose/meaning in life[b]	89	85	−.44	−5.1	.22

SOURCE.—For college freshmen data: Astin et al. (1986), Astin, Green, and Korn (1987), and Astin, Korn, and Berz (1989). For high school senior data: Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley (1980a, 1980b, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1987); Johnston, Bachman, and O'Malley (1980a, 1980b, 1980c, 1982, 1984, 1986).

NOTE.—For college freshmen, N = 13 for each regression; for high school seniors, N = 11 for each regression.

[a] Ranked by b within each life goal category.

[b] Principal indicator (see table 1).

with public interest tend to have small or negative trends. In this sense the micro data lend support to the time series analysis.

As regards recent generalizations about values of American youth, the evidence supports the Levine (1981) interpretation over that of Yankelovich (1981)—a growing emphasis on private materialism relative to personal self-fulfillment—and with regard to American society more generally, the Hirschman (1982)–Schlesinger (1986) view over that of Bellah and his associates (1985)—a shift from public concerns to private materialism. Although Inglehart's argument for a postmaterialist trend is not supported here, he might explain the shift toward materialism as due to the emergence of an "environment of insecurity," as in his analysis of European trends in the seventies (Inglehart 1985). Evidence testing this hypothesis will be looked at shortly.

Effects of Changing Values

The changes in life goals described in the preceding section have been accompanied by changes in personal plans and desires for the future among young people. In addition there have been related trends among young people in attitudes toward societal institutions, views of social problems, political beliefs, and expected political involvement. Each of these topics is itself a subject of substantial research and the observed trends doubtless reflect multiple causes. Our aim here is to point out a pattern of relationships, both in time-series and cross-sectional data consistent with the hypothesis that changing life goals have had wide-ranging effects.

PERSONAL PLANS AND DESIRES FOR THE FUTURE

If young people become more materialistic and less interested in making contributions to society, then one would expect them to shift toward college majors that are likely to lead to higher-paying jobs and away from those relating to public service employment. The trend in favor of business and away from education is illustrative of this shift (table 4, cols. 1–3).[2]

[2] Green (1989) and Astin (1985) present a fuller analysis of the change over time in desired majors in the CIRP surveys. Data just released indicate a recent reversal in the trends reported above, consistent with the shift in life goal trends after 1986 noted earlier (Higher Education Research Institute, 1990). Shifts in enrollments by college major might also reflect differential trends in the prospective earnings associated with different majors. Although starting salaries are not necessarily the last word (Berger 1988), it is worth noting that there is little difference in the trends in starting salaries for majors in business and engineering compared with those in humanities and social sciences from the early seventies thru mid-eighties (College Placement Council, 1981; updated with unpublished data supplied by Dawn Oberman, College Placement Council).

Table 4. OLS Regression Parameters against Time for Students' Personal Plans and Desires for the Future

	Percent Giving Specified Response		Regression Statistics		
	1976 (1)	1986 (2)	b (3)	t (4)	$\bar{R}^2$ (5)
Expected college major (college freshmen):					
Business	18[a]	25	.54	9.0	.87
Education	10[a]	8	−.29	−4.4	.61
Career plans:					
College freshmen:					
Business	16	20	.69	8.1	.91
Teaching (elementary and secondary)	8	7	−.11	−1.2	.05
High school seniors:					
Business	9	18	.82	8.4	.86
Work setting (high school seniors)—How would you rate as a place to work (% acceptable and desirable):					
Large corporation	59	74	1.68	11.0	.92
Social service organization	52	41	−1.02	−6.0	.78
Job characteristics (high school seniors)—How important is a job . . . (% very important):					
With chance to earn a good deal of money	47	5[illegible]	1.20	9.0	.89
With high status and prestige	20	3[illegible]	1.05	9.2	.89
Where chances for advancement and promotion are good	57	67	.79	5.2	.72
Most people look up to and respect	34	42	.75	11.0	.92
Which is interesting to do	88	86	−.26	−4.6	.67
That allows you to establish roots in community	42	38	−.33	−4.3	.64
Where you do not have to be a person you are not	73	71	−.37	−4.8	.69
With opportunity to be directly helpful to others	51	45	−.53	−5.8	.77

SOURCES.—See table 3.

[a] 1974.

After schooling, the next major life choice a typical young person faces is a career. Trends in career plans, the setting in which young people would like to work, and what they consider important in a job are highly consistent with the changed structure of life goals.[3] Both surveys report a significant increase in business as a planned career (table 4). In ratings by high school seniors of the desirability of nine different work settings, the biggest increase is in the desirability of working in a large corporation and the largest decrease in that of working in a social service agency. In ratings of the importance of twenty-four job characteristics, those that increase in importance are typically related to money and status, while characteristics that decrease in importance are linked to helping others or personal fulfillment (see table 4, where the four job characteristics with the strongest positive trends are shown, as are the four with the strongest negative trends).

TRENDS IN ATTITUDES TOWARD CAPITALIST INSTITUTIONS, ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION, AND POLITICAL LIFE

Inglehart (1981) sees those with materialistic values as being more supportive of business and the status quo, being less politically involved, and showing less concern for specific social issues such as the environment. Consistent with this, Herzog, Bachman, and Johnston (1978) find that less "concern for others" is correlated with reduced support for government efforts to address social problems.

Trend data, which come largely from the high school seniors' survey, lend support to these views. Students are increasingly satisfied with the job being done for the country by corporations, and there seems to be growing support for what one might call "capitalist values": an increased endorsement of profit making and the advertising of products that are not really needed (table 5, cols. 1–3). Both college freshman and high school seniors have become less supportive of the idea that the government should do something to clean up the environment.

High school seniors have also retreated from the idea of active political involvement. There is a significant decrease in support for the idea that a "good citizen tries to change government policies he disagrees with" (table 5). Also, students are less likely to expect that in their future lives they will write to public officials, work in a political campaign, participate in a demonstration, or participate in a boycott. A recent study finds that trends such as these are more pronounced among younger than older Americans (Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press 1990).

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[3] Changes of the type that we report have been noted in Astin (1985), Bachman (1987), Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley (1986), Easterlin and Crimmins (1988), Green and Astin (1985), and Herzog and Bachman (1982).

Finally, there are significant trends in young people's political beliefs and party identification over this period. In both surveys students report themselves increasingly conservative and decreasingly liberal (although one cannot be sure, of course, that the interpretation of these terms has remained constant over time). Among the high school seniors, this shift seemingly translates into a statistically significant increase in identification with the Republican party and decreased identification with the Democratic party (table 5).

CROSS-SECTIONAL VERSUS TIME SERIES RELATIONSHIPS

We have previously noted that cross-sectional relationships among life goals are fairly consistent with time series trends. Is the same true when we consider relationships between life goals and personal plans and attitudes? To answer this we examine the correlations in 1985 between indicators of the four-value orientations and those of plans and attitudes. Because of the five-questionnaire format of the high school senior survey only a limited number of indicators of plans and attitudes can be related to life goals at the micro level, but those that can, span the topics discussed above fairly well. It should be borne in mind that we are looking here only at simple correlations without control for other influences; moreover, the sample of college freshmen is so large that statistical significance is obtained even with correlations as low as .01.

Among college freshmen the relationship between private materialism and choosing a business major and career is positive, while that between materialism and study and work in education is negative (table 6, lines 1, 2). In contrast, emphasis on public interest shows correlations with school and career plans opposite in sign to the correlations for private materialism. People who emphasize personal self-fulfillment are more likely than others to reject business as a field of study. All of these relationships support the idea that the change over time in college major and career plans is related to changing values of the young.

A strong emphasis on private materialism is mildly related to less support for government action on the environment, and less support for political involvement (lines 3, 5). Once again, orientation toward the public interest shows the opposite relationships—more support for government action and political involvement.

Finally, although the relationships between life goals and political beliefs are quite weak, so far as they go they are consistent with the

Table 5. OLS Regression Parameters against Time in Attitudes toward Corporations and Capitalist Institutions, Environmental Action, and Political Life: Expected Political Involvement and Political Beliefs

	Percent Giving Specified Response		Regression Statistics		
	1976 (1)	1986 (2)	b (3)	t (4)	$\bar{R}^2$ (5)
Support for corporations and capitalist values, high school seniors:					
How good or bad a job is being done for the country as a whole by large corporations (% very poor + poor)	17	8	−1.16	−4.0	.60
In the U.S. we put too much emphasis on making profits and not enough on human well-being (% agree + mostly agree)	75	62	−1.25	−10.6	.92
There is nothing wrong with advertising that gets people to buy things they do not really need (% disagree)	44	27	−1.64	−5.6	.75
Environmental problems:					
High school seniors:					
Government should take action to solve our environmental problems even if it means that some of the products we now use would have to be changed or banned (% agree)	51	34	−1.68	−13.3	.95
College freshmen:					
The federal government is not doing enough to control environmental pollution (% agree)	83[a]	78	−.41	−6.2	.76

Political involvement, high school seniors:					
I feel a good citizen tries to change the government policies he disagrees with (% agree)	34	22	−1.17	−8.7	.88
Have you ever done, or do you plan to do, the following things (% will do + have done):					
Vote	88	88	.07	0.5	−.08
Write to public official	36	30	−.73	−5.4	.74
Work in a political campaign	18	14	−.46	−4.4	.64
Participate in a lawful demonstration	20	17	−.42	−3.6	.55
Boycott certain products or stores	25	17	−1.55	−4.8	.69
Political beliefs:					
Party preferences, high school seniors:					
% Republican (strong + mild)	16	28	1.04	5.3	.73
% Democrat (strong + mild)	26	20	−.46	2.4	.31
Political views:					
High school seniors:					
% conservative	14	17	.22	2.0	.23
% liberal + radical	27	22	−.50	−3.5	.53
College freshmen:					
% conservative/far right	15[a]	20	.51	8.5	.86
% liberal/far left	30[a]	24	−.74	−4.3	.59

SOURCES.—See table 3.

[a] 1974.

Table 6. Correlations between Life Goals and Various Plans, Attitudes, and Beliefs: 1985

	Life Goal			
	Private Materialism	Family	Self-fulfillment	Public Interest
College freshmen (N = 175,000):				
1. College major:				
Business	.13*	.04*	–.07*	–.06*
Education	–.10*	.07*	–.01*	.07*
2. Career plans:				
Business	.13*	.05*	–.05*	–.06*
Education	–.11*	.07*	.00	.07*
3. Government not doing enough to control pollution	–.02*	.00	.09*	.07*
4. Political beliefs	–.02*	–.05*	.05*	.03*
High school seniors (N = 3,150):				
5. A good citizen tries to change policies	–.05*	.01	.04	.09*
6. Political beliefs	.03	–.05*	.00	–.04
7. Political party	.02	–.02	.05*	.00

Source—Micro-data tapes for 1985.

Note.—The coding is as follows. Life goals: 1 = not important to 4 = essential, for college freshmen; 1 = not important to 4 = extremely important, for high school seniors. Line 3: 1 = disagree strongly to 4 = agree strongly. Line 4: 1 = far right to 5 = far left. Line 5: 1 = disagree to 5 = agree. Line 6: 1 = very conservative, 2 = conservative, 3 = moderate, none of the other categories, 4 = liberal, 5 = very liberal, 6 = radical. Line 7: 1 = strongly Republican, 2 = mildly Republican, 3 = don't know, Independent, 4 = mildly Democrat, 5 = strongly Democrat.

* Significant at .05 level.

trend results. Among college freshmen, those interested in money were more likely to lean toward the conservative end of the political spectrum, while the opposite was true of those stressing the public interest (line 4). There were no significant relationships among these variables for high school seniors (lines 6 and 7).

Clearly this is only a preliminary look at links between life goals and the plans and attitudes of American youth, and the correlation values are, at best, quite modest in magnitude. Nevertheless, one's impression is that it lends some micro-level support to the associations noted between the time series trends of table 3 and those of tables 4 and 5.

Causes of the Shift in Values

Why the shift in values of American youth? As a start on this question, this section first evaluates hypotheses that have been advanced with reference specifically to youth: the impact on young people of (*a*) major political and social events, (*b*) adverse economic changes breeding economic insecurity, and (*c*) important changes in family structure and/or the socialization of children. Then we turn to a hypothesis that sees the shift in the values of youth as part of a more general shift in values in the population as a whole due to the post-1973 slowing of the economy. Our procedure is a simple one: to examine the consistency between the time series trend in private materialism and that in each of various indicators of the proposed causal factors. We do not rule out the possibility of multiple causes; however, our interest here is in looking at each hypothesis individually.

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES

To a number of analysts, the rise in private materialism is seen as the result of a retreat from public concerns. Bachman and Johnston (1979a) argue, for example, that without dramatic events to rivet students' attention like the Vietnam War (and associated draft concerns) or the civil rights movement, they would naturally drift toward more immediate issues in their personal lives. Levine (1981) notes that, even after the Vietnam War ended, college students of the 1970s received continued exposure to negative national events including Watergate, conflict in the Middle East, the growth of international terrorist activities, and the vulnerability of our society to such international events as the OPEC oil crises. These events, he argues, led to cynicism and a sense of despair about public life and to a consequent focus on private material concerns. Similarly, Inglehart (1981), arguing in Maslovian terms, sees negative views of the world situation among youth, and a resulting

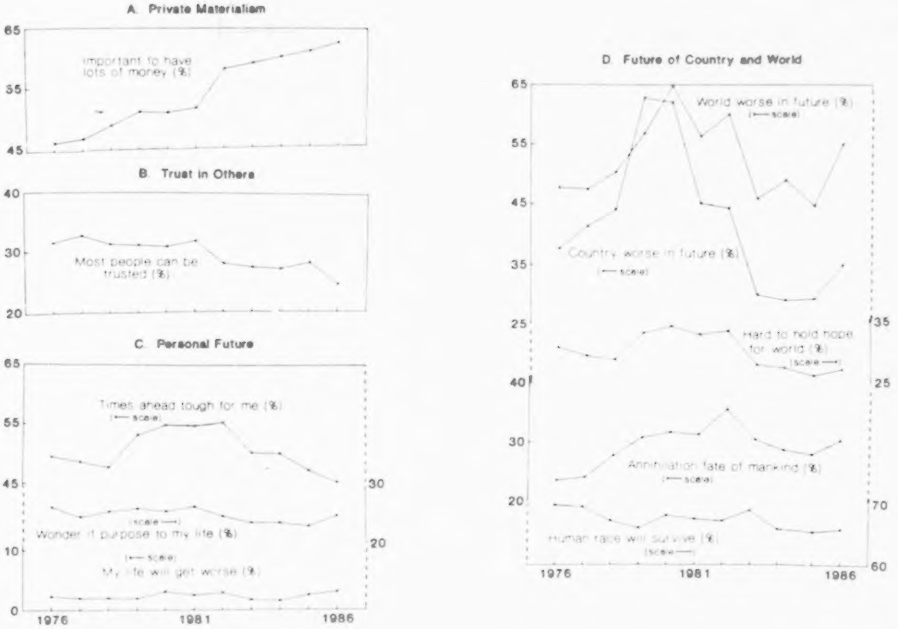

Figure 2. Private materialism among high school seniors, their trust in others, and views of the future, 1976–86. Source: See table 3.

feeling of physical insecurity, as causing increased emphasis on private materialism.

One difficulty with these arguments is that most of the events actually mentioned took place before 1980, while the shift in values continued beyond that date. Although one might try to argue in terms of lagged relationships, this seems implausible because of the dramatic nature of the events cited.

A second problem is that these arguments do not seem supported by trends in high school seniors' subjective views: their reports of how much faith they have in others, and their evaluations of their own futures and those of the country, the world, and "mankind." Figure 2 presents trends from 1976 to 1986 in responses from high school seniors to questions on such issues, together with that for private materialism.

On the whole, the time series patterns on students' trust and their view of the future are quite different from that on the importance of private materialism. Although students' trust in other people did diminish, the decline was concentrated in the years after 1981 and was small compared to the change in the importance of private materialism (fig. 2*A*, *B*). With regard to their evaluations of their personal future, there is very little change in the percent wondering "whether there is any real purpose in life in light of the world situation," and in the percent feeling their life will get worse in the next 5 years (fig. 2*C*).

There is, however, a sizable jump in the period 1979–82 in the percent feeling that "times ahead will be tougher for me." This pessimistic shift occurs also in several indicators of high school seniors' views of the future of the country and the world (fig. 2*D*, esp. the top three series). It seems likely that this pattern is linked to dramatic world events in the Middle East such as the overthrow of the Shah of Iran and the taking of hostages at the American Embassy in Iran, and perhaps also to the state of the economy. By 1983–86 most of these series are back to levels like those in 1976–78. Regression lines fitted to the series in figure 2*D* show no statistically significant trend over the full period, except for the last series, which has a barely significant negative trend. In general, it would seem difficult to argue that the movements in these series could explain the uptrend in private materialism.

In sum, examination of the pattern of change over time in students' levels of trust in others and optimism for themselves and the world leads to the conclusion that there is little consistency with the hypothesis that students have turned to pursuit of private materialism as a result of growing despair about dealing with others or about their own or world futures.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY

This hypothesis sees adverse conditions in the economy as causing young people to worry more about their personal economic prospects and to pay correspondingly less attention to "higher order" concerns, such as self-fulfillment or the public interest (Bellah et al. 1985; Inglehart 1981, 1985).

To consider this, we look first at the CIRP series on private materialism along with two economy-wide indicators—the unemployment rate of 20–24-year-olds and the consumer inflation rate. The latter is the indicator used by Inglehart (1985) to account for a materialistic swing in Europe. These indicators provide little support for the hypothesis. Private materialism rises fairly smoothly in both recession and expansion periods; neither of the macroeconomic series has a similar pattern (fig. 3).[4]

It is possible that the macroeconomic series do not capture correctly the immediate economic circumstances influencing teenagers' values. Perhaps more directly pertinent is the job situation of teenagers them-

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[4] The unemployment rates for all workers and 16–19-year-olds have trends and fluctuations virtually identical to those in the rate for 20–24-year-olds, though all three differ in average level.

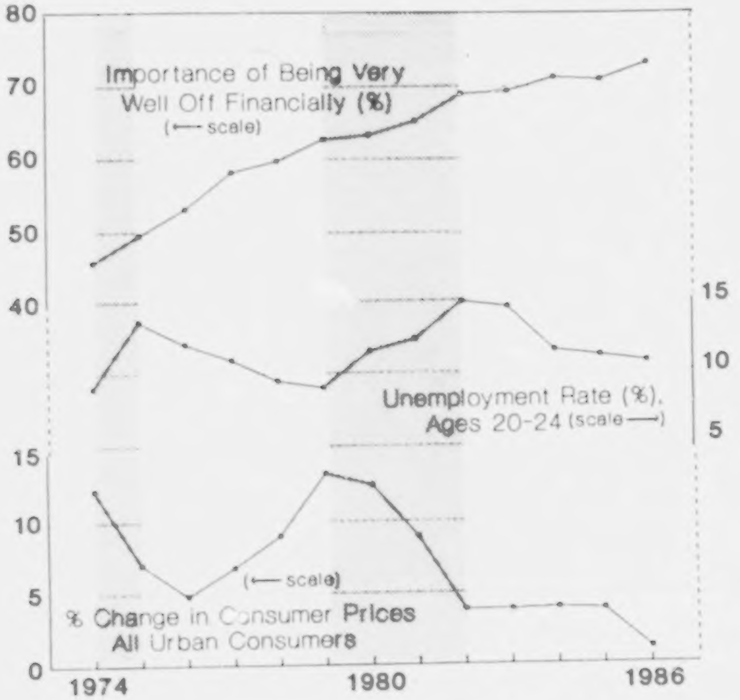

Figure 3. Private materialism among college freshmen, unemployment rate of 20–24-year-olds, and inflation rate, 1974–86. (Economic recession periods are shaded.) Source: The first series is from Astin et al. 1986, 1987; the others, from U.S. Bureau of the Census, various dates.

selves. If there were a trend toward poorer labor market experience among teenagers and greater concern among them about finding and keeping jobs, then increased emphasis on material success might result. Indeed, labor market experience and job worries do fluctuate with the business cycle in the way that one would expect (fig. 4*B*, *C*). However, there is little evidence of adverse trends. Note especially that the proportions working, average weekly hours, and concerns about getting or losing high school jobs are about the same at the end of the period as at the beginning. There is a modest decline in real weekly earnings before 1981, but thereafter the trend is flat.

One might discount teenagers' job experience as a significant factor in shaping their longer term outlook, on the grounds that such jobs have little bearing on their adult occupations. Teenagers themselves clearly downplay the relevance of these jobs to their future. In 1986 when asked whether their high school work was "a good stepping stone toward the kind of work you want in the long run," 56 percent

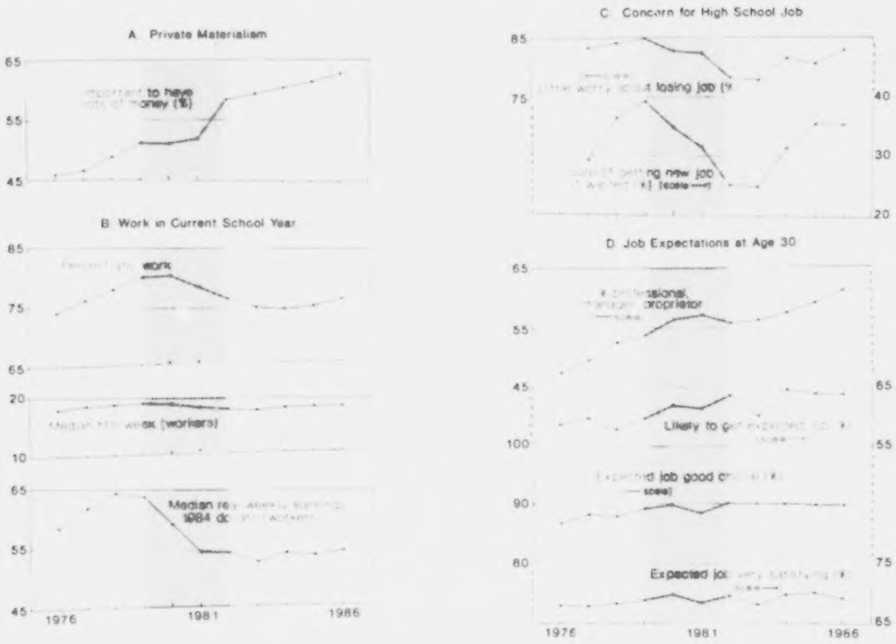

Figure 4. Private materialism, high school work, and job expectations at age 30, high school seniors, 1976–86. (Economic recession periods are shaded.) Source: See table 3. The earnings series in *B* is reported money earnings adjusted by the Consumer Price Index, CPI-X1 (U.S. Congressional Budget Office 1988).

said "not at all" and another 16 percent only said "a little" (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1987, p. 165).

More to the point, perhaps, are their responses to questions about the kind of work they expect to be doing when they are 30 years old, and, in particular, their certainty about actually getting this work. If deteriorating economic conditions bred uncertainty about being able to get jobs in the future, one might expect it to show up in responses to such queries. But, in fact, today's teenagers expect better jobs than did those in 1976 and feel more certain about getting such jobs and that their choice of job is a good one (fig. 4*D*). There is little in any of these data to suggest that rising materialism among high school seniors reflects greater worry about their own economic future. Nor is there evidence that they have become more worried about the nation's economic prospects. The proportion saying that they worry sometimes or often about the nation's economic problems was down from 68 percent in 1976 to 61 percent in 1986 (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1980a, p. 169; 1987, p. 177).

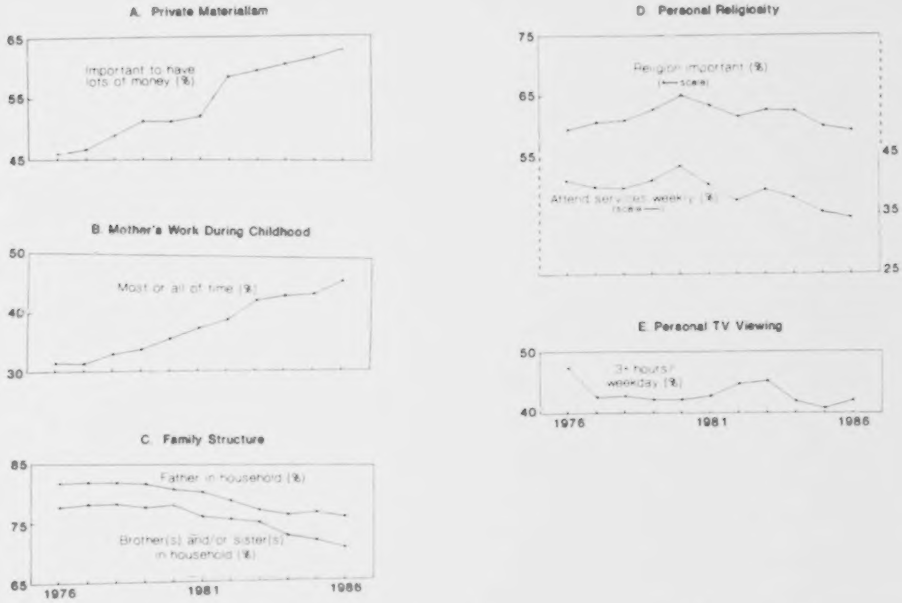

Figure 5. Private materialism and background and personal characteristics of high school seniors, 1976–86. Source: See table 3.

SOCIALIZATION AND FAMILY EXPERIENCES

A third set of hypotheses relates to changes in family structure or young people's socialization experiences that may have caused an increasingly materialistic orientation. Inglehart (1981) and Lesthaege and Meekers (1986) are among those stressing the importance of early socialization in the formation of values. As will be seen, we agree with this general idea, but our notion of the specific mechanisms at work is different from others.

The dramatic growth in mothers' labor force participation has been cited by some as the cause of greater materialistic emphasis among young people (Greenberger and Steinberg 1986). In fact, among the mothers of high school seniors, the increase in labor force participation is quite similar in both the timing and the amount of change to the growth in emphasis on materialism (fig. 5*A*, *B*). As will be seen shortly, however, we take this trend in mothers' labor force participation as symptomatic of a more basic cause.

Other family structure and socialization hypotheses come out less well. For example, a growth in single parent families and/or decline in number of children per family might be expected to lead to increased material and self-centered emphasis among young people. But the trends in these variables are flat in the latter part of the 1970s, while materialism increases noticeably (fig. 5, cf. *A* and *C*). Nor does it seem that the rise in materialism is linked to decreased religiosity (Lesthaege and Meekers 1986; Preston 1986; Thornton 1989). Between 1976 and 1986 the importance of religion to young people first rises and then falls, returning to its initial value. Also, although religious attendance declines in the eighties, it is fairly constant in the seventies (fig. 5*D*). Similarly, while television is now recognized as a major influence in the socialization of children (Clapp 1988), TV viewing has actually drifted slightly downward over the period (fig. 5*E*). (This does not rule out, of course, the possibility of a change in TV content.) Finally, the "premature affluence" hypothesis sees a growth in work and spending among high school students as leading to increased emphasis on material values (Bachman 1983; Freedman and Thornton 1990; Greenberger and Steinberg 1986). As we have seen, however, there has been virtually no trend in the proportion of high school seniors who work, and average real weekly earnings actually declined somewhat between the seventies and eighties (fig. 4*B*). Thus, there is little to suggest a trend toward increasing affluence among the young during this period that might account for greater materialism.

ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION IN THE POPULATION AT LARGE

So far we have focused on hypotheses relating specifically to American youth. It is possible, however, that the trends for youth mirror those for the adult population more generally. Although directly comparable life goal data for adults are not available, there is some evidence that this is so. Trends in responses to a question asked by the Roper Organization probing Americans' views of the "good life" reveal a startling number of similarities to those in the aspirations of high school seniors. Shown in Table 7 is the percentage change from 1975 to 1988 in answers to the "good life" question, along with that from 1976 to 1986 in responses to roughly comparable questions asked of high school seniors. Although the questions and period covered differ between the surveys, the general pattern is quite similar—a strong shift in favor of private materialism (rows 1–3) and away from public concerns and personal self-fulfillment (rows 4 and 5). While more needs to be done to explore similarities and differences between adults and youth,[5] it

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[5] The Roper question was asked in 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984, and 1988 (Roper Organization 1989). The temporal changes for the money question are somewhat different from those in the data for American youth, although increases occur both in the 1970s and 1980s. By age the overall change in the importance of money between 1975 and 1988 is quite similar for persons 18–29, 30–44, and 45–59 years old.

Table 7. Percent of Adults Identifying Specified Item as Part of the Good Life, 1975–88, and Percentage Point Change in Comparable Item for High School Seniors, 1976–86

Components of Good Life	All Adults 1975 (1)	All Adults 1988 (2)	Change (Col. 2 − Col. 1) (3)	High School Seniors: Change, 1976–86 (4)
1. A lot of money	38	62	24	17
2. Really nice clothes	36	44	8	15
3. A vacation home	19	42	23	10
4. A job that is interesting	69	61	−8	−2
5. A job that contributes to the welfare of society	38	35	−3	−6

SOURCES.—The good life data are from the Roper Organization (1989). We are grateful to Bickley Townsend for providing these and related unpublished data, on which the present discussion draws.

NOTE.—N = about 2,000. The specific question wording is as follows: "We often hear people talk about what they want out of life. Here are a number of different things." (Card shown to respondent.) "When you think of the good life—the life you'd like to have, which of the things on this list, if any, are part of that good life as far as you personally are concerned?" The high school seniors' data in row 1 are the same as those used in fig. 1 and table 3; in rows 4 and 5, the same as those used in table 4 concerning job characteristics. Those in rows 2 and 3 are reported in Crimmins, Easterlin, and Saito (1991) and cover 1977–86. All of these data are from the Monitoring the Future survey.

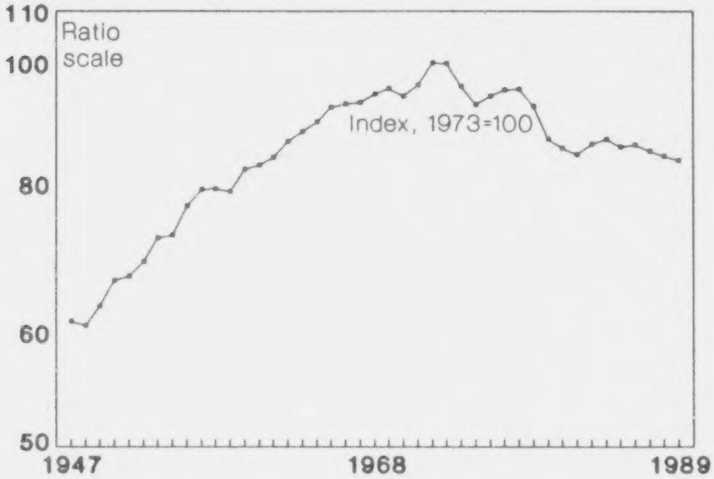

Figure 6. Average real weekly earnings of all workers, total private nonagricultural sector, 1947–89 (1977 dollars). Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, various dates.

seems likely that the changes in values among American youth reflect those in the population at large. Over three-fourths of high school seniors say that their ideas of what values are important in life are very or mostly similar to those of their parents; since 1978, when this question was first asked, there has been a mild trend toward greater agreement (Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1980b, p. 164; 1987, p. 171).

In turn, this leads one to ask, what could have produced such a dramatic change throughout the entire population? Our speculation is that it is linked to the widely recognized slowing of the American economy after 1973 and, in particular, to the downturn in real wage rates, illustrated in figure 6 by average real weekly earnings. From the end of World War II to 1973 the uptrend in real wage rates was remarkably steady; thereafter, a downtrend and leveling off occurred. The decline in real wage rates implies that if Americans wished merely to maintain their per capita living level of 1973, then they would have had to change their economic and social behavior, for example, by working more. But the living level to which Americans aspired in the post-1973 period did not remain fixed at its 1973 value; rather, the desired living level was itself trending upward—this is clearly shown by the Roper data cited above. When considered in relation to the change in material aspirations, therefore, the economic deprivation being faced by the American population after 1973 was even greater than that suggested by the decline in absolute wage rates, and probably growing. Unfortunately, we cannot measure very well the movements in economic deprivation, for lack of an annual time series that captures accurately the movement in material aspirations in the population at large. But there is clear evidence, consistent with the hypothesis of growing economic deprivation, that Americans changed their behavior in ways that would improve their living levels. Mothers increased their labor force participation dramatically, childbearing was deferred, and family size was reduced (Easterlin 1987; Easterlin, Macdonald, and Macunovich 1990; Levy and Michel 1986). Note that the rise in mothers' labor force participation shown in figure 5 is taken here as resulting at least in part from a growing sense of economic deprivation.

A population faced with growing difficulty in achieving its material aspirations, and, in consequence, changing its behavior to reduce or eliminate this shortfall, is likely to place increasing emphasis on the importance of making money and to pass this sense of importance on to the young as part of young people's socialization experience. This happened, we suspect, not only in relations between adults and the young at home but also in school, in the workplace, on the playing field, and via the content of the media. The young learned the lesson by mirroring adults' shift in values toward private materialism and also by changing their own behavior appropriately, reorienting themselves toward pursuits that would increase their earnings capacity. This change in behavior of the young may explain why there is no evidence of growing economic insecurity among them. Although today's youth want more money, they feel, whether rightly or not, that they are better able to get it. Evidence of growing confidence among the young appears in freshmen ratings of self-confidence and in high school seniors' responses to questions about how good they think they would be in each of several roles—worker, parent, and spouse (Astin, Green, and Korn 1987, p. 84; Bachman, Johnston, and O'Malley 1980a, pp. 104–5; 1986, pp. 107–8).

Earlier, note was made of evidence that the retreat from political life has been greater among the young than old. Does this contradict the evidence that the shift in values was similar across age groups? Not necessarily. The young are at the age where they are just starting to get involved in political life. A greater response by the young to the same change in values that older persons are experiencing would be plausible, because the young are less committed and less entrenched in their ways of life. Thus, not only in their political behavior but in their economic and social behavior generally one might expect a greater impact on the young of a given change in values because the young have more options for change available to them.

Summary and Conclusions

Since the early seventies there has been a marked shift in the value orientations of American youth. There has been a substantial increase in private materialism as a life goal, a modest turning away from the public interest, and a sharp decline in emphasis on personal self-fulfillment. Compared with public interest and personal self-fulfillment, family concerns have increased modestly, but not nearly as much as has the emphasis on private materialism. Relative to private materialism, the other three goals have all declined in importance. Since about 1986–87, this shift appears to have ended and may even have started to turn around, but the life goals of young people today are still much different from those of their predecessors 15 years ago.

The change in life goals through 1986 has been accompanied by changes in personal plans and desires for the future among young people. There has been a shift both in expected college majors and career plans toward those that lead to higher paying jobs—for example, toward business and away from education. The desirability of working in large corporations has risen substantially while the attractiveness of work in a social service agency has declined. Trends in preferred job characteristics show an increase in importance of those related to money and status and decreased importance of those related to public interest and personal self-fulfillment.

There has also been a marked increase in support for capitalist institutions, such as profit making and advertising, and increased belief that corporations are doing a good job. At the same time, there has been a retreat from support for government action in areas such as cleaning up the environment.

In addition, there has been a decline in actual or potential political involvement of American youth, such as writing to public officials, working in a political campaign, or participating in demonstrations or boycotts. This has been accompanied by an increase in those identifying themselves as politically conservative and supporting the Republican party.

Some scholars attribute the decline in public concerns to the changing political and social climate of the period and to growing cynicism and disillusionment among young people connected with this. But the subjective attitudes of American youth during this period fail to show a trend toward greater cynicism or increasing disillusionment with either their own prospects or the societal or world outlook.

Others argue that insecurity about their economic futures has caused young people to focus more on their personal economic situation and to pay correspondingly less attention to "higher order" concerns such as the public interest or self-fulfillment. Again, however, there is little evidence that the attitudes of American youth toward their economic prospects changed in a way consistent with this hypothesis; on the contrary, young people have, if anything, become more optimistic about their economic outlook.

Neither is there support for a number of hypotheses that look to changes in young peoples' family background or socialization experience. The break-up of families, decline in family size, and changes among the young in religiosity, personal affluence, and TV exposure—none of these changes in a way similar to the trend in private materialism. The exception, the growth in labor force participation of mothers, is symptomatic of a more basic cause.

The clue to this cause is the apparently quite similar shift in values among adults and young people generally. Among adults this shift in values, we speculate, reflects a growing sense of economic deprivation connected with the slowing of economic growth after 1973 and the behavioral changes thus induced, such as greater labor force participation of mothers and reduced childbearing. These feelings of economic deprivation, in turn, arose from a growing disparity between rising material aspirations, on the one hand, and lower real wage rates, on the other. There is evidence of both these developments post-1973, but it is too fragmentary, unfortunately, to measure the time series movement in economic deprivation for comparison with that in values.

The shifting values of adults were, we believe, transmitted to the young in their varied contacts—at home, in school, in the workplace, on the playing field, and via the media. The change in values led young people, in turn, to reorient themselves toward jobs and careers that would pay more. Because of these adaptations, young people, on average, have ended up feeling more secure about their economic prospects.

Some may have wondered at the lack of reference heretofore to the 1980s "decade of greed" and its possible impact on values. The answer should now be clear. The shift in values we have been experiencing antedates the 1980s and, and in our view, reflects the onset after 1973 of what Levy (1987) has called the "quiet depression." The "decade of greed" and its political and social concommitants was itself a result of the more fundamental economic forces at work.

As mentioned, this explanation is speculative. If it is correct, however, it implies that value orientations may shift back and forth in conjunction with longer-term swings in the growth of the economy of the sort observed in historical experience (Easterlin 1968; Maddison 1982). The idea of longer term swings in values has also been advanced by Hirschman (1982) and Schlesinger (1986). But while they see such swings as due to an endogenous mechanism, we see them as the product of an exogenous force, alternating phases of rapid and slow growth of the economy. Indeed, it is possible that a new upswing in the economy's longer-term growth is now underway and that the recent leveling of the materialistic trend may reflect this.

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POLLING ON THE ISSUES

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE NUCLEAR FREEZE

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Abstract Throughout the first term of the Reagan administration, the nuclear freeze movement headlined the news and scored numerous political victories. Hundreds of state and local governments, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives, passed resolutions in support of the freeze. Public opinion polls played a major role in the debate, as the media and freeze advocates cited numerous polls indicating overwhelming public support for the initiative. Yet a comprehensive and detailed examination of national polls reveals that public support for the freeze came heavily qualified. While Americans expressed strong support for the basic concept of a freeze, they expressed doubts about the possibility of a verifiable and balanced freeze agreement. Furthermore, the public doubted that the Soviet Union genuinely desired such an agreement. Most surprisingly, the public did not pay much attention to the debate. Few Americans claimed to know or care much about the freeze initiative, and fewer still felt positively toward the political activists behind the freeze.

In March 1980, disarmament activist Randall Forsberg first proposed a bilateral freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of new nuclear weapons (Forsberg 1980). Conceived as a mechanism for reuniting and reinvigorating the "peace movement" (see Forsberg 1984, pp. vii–viii), the freeze attracted support from a broad array of mainstream political groups as well. By the spring of 1982, virtually the entire liberal establishment had endorsed the freeze (see Garfinkle 1984, pp. 77–121), and Congress began a 2-year debate over various freeze resolutions (see Waller 1987). Meanwhile, freeze activists lobbied hard for state and local freeze resolutions and circulated petitions

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 55:534–569 © 1991 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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to put freeze referenda on local ballots. By November 1982, 12 state legislatures, 275 city governments, and 446 New England town meetings had passed freeze resolutions, and voters had approved freeze referenda in eight states, the District of Columbia, and over two dozen cities (Herbers 1982, p. A22).

The political success of the freeze campaign stemmed, in large measure, from a virtual consensus that the public overwhelmingly endorsed the initiative. Depicting support for the freeze as broad-based and rapidly growing, the news media predicted that the issue would dominate the political landscape for many years to come. "Once in a great while," Bill Moyers commented on the "CBS Evening News," "public opinion seems to rise up with a singular message, as if a great revelation had come to the common imagination. Something on that order may be occurring now . . . as a grass-roots campaign is spreading in support of a bilateral freeze on nuclear weapons" (CBS News 1982a, pp. 8–9).

The newsmagazines went further, describing support for the freeze as "spontaneous" and "grass-roots" and emphasizing its demographic and political diversity. In 1982, *Newsweek* reported that "a cross section" of Americans had "suddenly enlisted" in this "loosely linked, burgeoning campaign to end the nuclear arms race" and concluded that their numbers were "mushrooming . . . growing faster than even their own leaders ever expected" (Newsweek 1982, pp. 20–21). Similarly, *Time* (1982b, p. 24) reported that the freeze attracted "broad-based support" from "across the socioeconomic spectrum," and in March 1982 the newsmagazine published a cover story describing the freeze movement as "far more broadly based" than the antiwar movement of the 1960s (Time 1982a, p. 10).

The political significance of such reports should not be underestimated. In Congress, freeze advocates echoed the media coverage, proclaiming support for the initiative a "national grass-roots mandate" (U.S. Congress 1982b, p. H5311). Convinced that "millions of Americans" had sent them a "powerful message" (U.S. Congress 1983, p. H1274), many in Congress believed that they could oppose the freeze only "at political peril for themselves and for their political parties" (U.S. Congress 1983, p. H1218). In the end, the Republican-controlled Senate, more insulated from electoral pressures, refused to endorse the freeze initiative. But the House finally did pass a freeze resolution by nearly a two-to-one margin, despite vigorous opposition from the Reagan administration (see Cohn 1983).

Public opinion surveys figured prominently in the congressional freeze debate. Citing poll after poll showing from nearly 70 percent to over 80 percent of the American public supporting the initiative, freeze supporters proclaimed "the message from the grassroots . . . clear":

"the people" demanded "an immediate nuclear freeze" (U.S. Congress 1982a, p. 52). Among the polls cited during the House debate in 1982 were: a *Newsweek* poll showing that "68% of Americans favor a freeze"; a Gallup poll from June 1981 indicating that 72 percent of the public favored a "mutual ban on the production of nuclear weapons"; a CBS News/*New York Times* poll also showing 72 percent of Americans favoring a freeze; and a Harris poll indicating that "81 percent of those polled favored a bilateral freeze" (U.S. Congress 1982a, p. 43; 1982b, pp. H5287, H5299, H5316). In 1983, House freeze supporters added still more polls to the list: a Gallup poll from December 1982 showing "71 percent of all American adults" favoring "an immediate nuclear freeze"; a new Harris poll, taken in January 1983, showing "76 percent of the public in favor of a U.S.-U.S.S.R. freeze agreement"; and yet another Harris poll from March 1983 revealing that "79% of the American public" supported "a bilateral freeze" (U.S. Congress 1983, pp. H1233–34, H2058).

Clearly, the polls proved a potent political weapon for advocates of a nuclear freeze. Yet rarely did the pundits or the politicians carefully consider the questions or other methodological characteristics of the polls they invoked. Nor did they consider polls on related issues or polls measuring the public's knowledge and concern about the freeze issue. In short, they developed, at best, a superficial understanding of public opinion. In the remainder of this essay, we take a more detailed look at the available polling data and sketch a very different portrait of opinion on the freeze.

Polling on the "Freeze"

Survey research reveals that "a strong concern about nuclear war has seldom been uppermost in the minds of the great majority of Americans" (Schuman, Ludwig, and Krosnick 1986, p. 520). Over the years, as Smith (1988, p. 560) has observed, "other issues such as the economy, the environment, and the budget deficit have topped the public's list of concerns," with most Americans indicating "either that they did not think nuclear war would occur or at least that it was not an immediate threat." At the same time, however, Americans historically have expressed concern about nuclear weapons and have supported efforts to negotiate arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. Throughout the nuclear age, as Ladd (1982, pp. 20, 41) has observed, surveys consistently have shown the public's "ample appreciation of the bomb's awful destructiveness" and "widespread support for efforts to minimize its destructive potential." According to Ladd, the nuclear freeze campaign did *not* reflect "some recent change in the public's thinking." Indeed, the "most striking finding" to emerge from a review of survey data since World War II is that *"American opinion on nuclear weapons and war has changed scarcely at all over nearly four decades."*

Ladd, however, has been virtually alone in downplaying the significance of the freeze. In 1982, pollster Patrick Caddell called the freeze movement "the most significant movement since the environmental movement of the late 1960's" (Butterfield 1982, p. 38). Meanwhile, California pollster Mervin Field appeared on the "CBS Evening News" describing the freeze campaign as "a very strong, unusual, spontaneous grass-roots movement" and warning Ronald Reagan and all other politicians that they had "better run fast to get ahead of it" (CBS News 1982b, p. 6). In the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Louis Harris spoke of a new and "urgent hunger for peace" that cut "right across the spectrum of social and political divisions in this country." Calling this change an "incredible phenomenon," Harris concluded: "It's an idea that will not go away. It's going to be with us until the final weapons are obliterated" (Kalven 1982, pp. 3, 5). Finally, pollster Daniel Yankelovich reported in 1984 that "a great change, largely unnoted," had "transformed the outlook of the American electorate toward nuclear arms" (Yankelovich and Doble 1984, p. 33). Yankelovich's Public Agenda Foundation even prepared a "briefing book" explaining how presidential candidates might exploit this historic "turnabout" in public opinion (Public Agenda Foundation 1984).

Yet analyzed comprehensively and in depth, the pollsters' own data reveal that public opinion was considerably more complicated, and far less supportive of the freeze, than these interpretations suggest. Based upon more than 400 freeze-related questions asked by 12 national pollsters between 1980 and 1984,[1] our analysis reveals strong support for arms control efforts and for the general concept of a "freeze." However, that support came heavily qualified, and some of those qualifications could be interpreted, in practical terms, as opposition to the freeze. Furthermore, the public had serious reservations about the possibility of such an agreement; many simply did not believe the Soviet Union desired an arms control agreement. Most surprisingly, the public simply did not care all that much about the issue. Most

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[1] Most of the poll questions, a total of 361, were obtained from the Roper Center's computerized data base. To these were added approximately 40 other questions identified in a review of published literature. A review of the *American Public Opinion Index* (Opinion Research Service 1981–84) revealed no additional national polls on the issue; state polls identified in the *Index* were excluded from the analysis. The search also revealed a detailed opinion study on nuclear arms published by the Public Agenda Foundation (1984). With but a few exceptions, its questions are excluded from the analysis because of the very small sample ($N = 505$).

Americans paid little attention to the freeze debate, and they were far less enamored of the freeze movement than news reports suggested.

In the discussion and tables that follow, we have grouped poll questions into a rough typology. Within each group, questions are ordered alphabetically by pollster. Due to space limitations, not all questions examined in the analysis are discussed or presented in the tables.[2] In the case of series, variations in question wording are identified by asterisks. For each question, interview dates, population, and sample size are identified. All figures presented in the tables are percentages.

GROUP 1: GENERAL SUPPORT FOR ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

As Ladd (1982, p. 41) has observed, Americans historically have supported efforts to negotiate agreements limiting nuclear weapons, and they continued to express that support in the early 1980s. Group 1 of the tables below presents 23 polls assessing general support for arms control and disarmament. The highest levels of support for arms control were found in polls combining mention of negotiations or "agreements"with vague references to "limitations," "reductions," or "cutbacks" in nuclear weapons. Among the polls included in group 1, Harris's question about "negotiating an effective nuclear arms agreement that would call for a real cutback" in U.S. and Soviet arsenals (table 7) produced the highest level of support: 87 percent. Even higher figures (89–90 percent) came out of two polls not included in the tables: a June 1984 Harris poll asking whether respondents favored "the U.S. and the Soviet Union sitting down to negotiate an agreement to reduce nuclear weapons on each side," and a November 1984 Gordon Black poll (for *USA Today*) assessing support for "negotiating nuclear arms limitations or reductions with the Soviet Union." While these findings might indicate an increase in support for arms control negotiations toward the end of the freeze campaign in 1984, the data overall do not support such a conclusion. The Roper series (table 10) reveals a tendency to see negotiations as requiring a greater effort toward the end of the period of study, but other series actually reveal some decline in support for arms control between 1981 and 1984 (tables 1 and 6).

The lowest levels of support for arms control appear in several polls with problematic questions. For example, the 1982 *Los Angeles Times* poll (table 9) asked: "Do you think the United States should meet with the Soviet Union this year to try to reach agreement on nuclear weapons, or do you think the United States should put off a meeting this year until we are in a better bargaining position—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?" This question, of course, may have implied that the United States would be in a "better bargaining position" later. Three questions posed by Gallup in 1981 also may have been biased against arms control. On two occasions, Gallup asked how respondents would "vote" in a disarmament referendum sponsored by the United Nations (table 3). The comparatively low support for arms control found in these polls might have resulted from negative opinions about the United Nations or from doubts about the efficacy of such a referendum. The third question (table 2) asked whether respondents would "favor or oppose an agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built." This question produced the lowest level of support of all the general arms control questions. The explanation may lie in a realization among some respondents that the United States and the Soviet Union are not the only nuclear powers. This suspicion seems confirmed by Harris polls that found much stronger support for an agreement among all nuclear nations to "destroy" their weapons (table 5).

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[2] Only polls cited in the discussion are presented in the tables. The full set of tables is available from the authors.

It is important to note, however, that the polls in group 1 reveal little about the sort of arms control agreements Americans might have supported. Most either made no mention at all of the purpose of negotiating with the Soviet Union, or they suggested only some general objective, ranging from merely "limiting" nuclear weapons to "reducing" or even eliminating them altogether. Within group 1, only two polls aimed to assess public opinion on a specific arms control proposal: the Gallup (table 4) and the Harris (table 8) questions about George Kennan's proposed 50 percent reduction in the arsenals of both superpowers (see Kennan 1981, pp. 175–82). Although both revealed strong support for the proposal, the questions were flawed in both cases. Gallup's question presented the proposal as if it were President Reagan's initiative,[3] while Harris transformed Kennan's "immediate across-the-boards reduction" into a gradual, 5-year reduction. Furthermore, neither pollster assessed whether respondents understood the "50 percent reduction" as a specific alternative to the administration's arms control policies or simply as an arbitrary figure—a figure the pollster just "pulled out of the hat."

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[3] In addition, the Gallup poll presented respondents with a verification plan very different from that proposed by Kennan himself. While Kennan's proposal called for verification by "such national means . . . as now lie at the disposal of the two powers," Gallup asked respondents whether they would favor establishing a "worldwide organization which would make sure, by regular inspection, that neither the U.S. nor the Soviet Union violates this arms agreement." Thus, it is misleading for Gallup to report that an "overwhelming majority" favors the "Kennan proposal"; see Gallup Report (1982, p. 13).

GROUP 2: SUPPORT FOR THE CONCEPT OF A NUCLEAR FREEZE

Polls assessing support for the general concept of a nuclear freeze revealed levels of support comparable to polls assessing general support for arms control and disarmament. By 1982, virtually all major pollsters began asking questions about the "freeze," and virtually all reported strong, often overwhelming, support for the concept. Yet as the tables in group 2 reveal, the polls produced no evidence of "mushrooming" support for the freeze across the period of the study. Indeed, series with consistent questions revealed, if anything, a decline in support for the freeze after 1982 (tables 21, 28, and 29).

The pollsters complicated interpretation of support for the freeze by asking a wide variety of questions. Yet those differences also have some interesting implications about the nature of that support. Questions that included arguments for and against the freeze, for example, actually seemed to decrease support for the concept. The best evidence comes from two ABC polls (table 11) that asked respondents their opinion of a freeze both before and after rating an equal number of pro- and anti-freeze arguments. In both cases, support for a freeze declined, particularly the percentage of those approving "strongly" of a freeze. In addition, the only question to include both pro- and anti-freeze arguments, the *Los Angeles Times* poll of March 1982 (table 24), found only 52 percent in favor (with an additional 5 percent leaning toward support) of a freeze. Polls revealing higher levels of support sometimes included only pro-freeze arguments (tables 17 and 20), while questions implying that a freeze might be "risky" (table 12) or mentioning alternatives to the freeze resulted in lower levels of support. For example, some of the lowest pro-freeze figures came in a pair of *Los Angeles Times* polls asking respondents to choose among a freeze, an agreement to reduce both arsensals, an agreement to destroy all nuclear weapons, or no agreement at all (table 23). Similarly, an NBC/AP poll allowing respondents to choose between a freeze and a continuation of the nuclear buildup actually revealed more support for the latter (table 27). One last finding reinforces suspicions that support for the freeze was, at best, fickle. A CBS/*New York Times* poll conducted in May 1982 revealed that 72 percent of the public supported the freeze (table 13)—a finding cited often during the congressional freeze debate. At the same time, however, nearly 40 percent of the same sample called it "more dangerous" for the United States to agree to a freeze than to build "more nuclear weapons" (table 16).

In short, the public strongly, even overwhelmingly, supported the general concept of a nuclear freeze. At the same time, however, there is no evidence that support for the freeze "mushroomed" throughout the period, or that the public supported anything more specific than the "freeze" metaphor itself—the imagery of an escalating arms race suddenly "frozen" in place. The findings suggest that exposure to arguments about the freeze reduced public support, and other data help to account for this phenomenon. In April 1983, the Roper poll asked a split sample of 2,000 adults to rate six pro- and six anti-freeze arguments as very convincing, somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing. Respondents rated anti-freeze arguments, on average, "very" or "somewhat convincing" 58 percent of the time, compared to 47 percent for the pro-freeze arguments.

Most important, high levels of support for the freeze depended upon several specific conditions. First, the public supported only a bilateral freeze or a freeze among all nuclear nations. Most questions asked only about a bilateral freeze, a freeze between the United States and Soviet Union, or a freeze among all nations. The absence of any such reference might explain the unusually low pro-freeze figure in the *LA Times* poll of September 1983 (table 26). Second, very high levels of support for the freeze depended in considerable measure on confidence that such an agreement could be verified. Perhaps the best evidence of this came in the May 1982 CBS/*New York Times* poll (table 13) which revealed that while 72 percent of Americans supported a freeze, 83 percent would support it if assured that each country "could catch the other . . . cheating on the agreement" (table 15). Further evidence comes from the *LA Times* series (table 26), in which the addition of a reference to verification in the question in November 1983 resulted in an increase of more than 20 percentage points in "strong" approval of the freeze. Finally, public support for the freeze was conditional upon belief in the equivalency of the two superpowers' arsenals. Again, a follow-up question in the CBS/*New York Times* poll of May 1982 best reveals the effect of this condition. The poll asked those who initially declined to support the freeze if they might change their minds if the United States and the Soviet Union were left with "about an equal amount of nuclear weapons." This time the converts combined with those initially supporting the freeze to produce one of the highest pro-freeze figures of all: 87 percent (table 14).

All of these "conditions" warrant closer examination, for they involve some of the key controversies of the freeze debate. With but a few exceptions, the polls assessed support for a "bilateral" freeze. Yet freeze opponents denied that such a freeze could be verified, and they argued that an immediate freeze would leave the United States at a nuclear disadvantage. In assessing general support for the freeze, some pollsters, in effect, resolved these controversies in favor of the pro-freeze advocates. For example, a number of polls assessed support only for a "verifiable freeze," and these polls, not surprisingly, produced some of the highest pro-freeze figures (tables 18, 19, 22, 24, 25, and 30).[4] The public, however, continued to have its doubts that a freeze could be verified, and they did not wish to see the United States "frozen" into a nuclear disadvantage. In other words, the public had considerable doubts about the possibility of a bilateral, verifiable, and balanced freeze, as analysis of some additional, more specific polls will demonstrate.

GROUP 3: SUPPORT FOR UNILATERAL ACTIONS

The most important condition underlying support for the freeze was that it be a bilateral agreement. While support for arms control and the freeze in general remained consistently high throughout the Reagan administration's first term in office, so too did the public consistently reject a unilateral freeze or any sort of moves toward unilateral disarmament. Only about 15–19 percent of the public supported unilateral disarmament (table 33), while slightly more—approximately 22–23 percent—supported a freeze regardless of Soviet compliance (tables 31*, 31**, and 32). It is interesting that approximately a quarter of the population, when given the choice, apparently rejected disarmament under any circumstances (table 35), and at least one poll (table 34) revealed more than twice as many Americans favoring a quest for nuclear superiority as favoring a unilateral freeze. A Public Agenda Foundation poll conducted in May 1984 (table 36) suggested that a majority of the public might be willing to support a temporary unilateral freeze "to see if the Soviets will follow suit." But with the exception of the anomalous Gallup poll of September 1982 (table 31),[5] the data consistently show large majorities of the public opposed to any sort of unilateral arms control measures.

GROUP 4: IMPORTANCE OF VERIFICATION

The public's rejection of unilateral measures assumes greater significance when one considers attitudes toward verification of arms control agreements with the Soviets. As the tables in group 4 reveal, overwhelming majorities agreed that verification was essential to any bilateral freeze on nuclear weapons. But the public had considerable doubts about the feasibility of verifying agreements with the Soviets, and hence they may have doubted the possibility of a genuinely bilateral freeze.

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[4] The comparatively low levels of support for the freeze in the two *LA Times* polls (tables 24 and 25) may be due to two other factors discussed elsewhere. As noted earlier, the March 1982 *Times* poll may have found less support for the freeze because it included pro- and anti-freeze arguments, while the April 1983 question asked about the freeze movement rather than the concept of a freeze itself. As we argue in discussing the tables in group 7 below, the polls showed Americans supportive of the idea of a freeze but not very supportive of the activists promoting it.

[5] This poll still shows a majority opposed to a unilateral freeze, but the percentage supporting a unilateral freeze is about double that found in other polls. The explanation remains somewhat of a mystery, although it probably involves phrasing the question in terms of a hypothetical national referendum on the freeze issue.

Just as the presumption that a freeze could be verified produced overwhelming pro-freeze majorities in group 2 questions, questions that raised doubts about verification significantly diminished support for a freeze. While one poll found a slight majority proclaiming it an "acceptable risk" to sign an agreement without "foolproof verification" (table 50), another showed the public proclaiming verification more important than halting the growth of the nuclear arsenal by a margin of 67–25 percent (table 42). The most revealing finding, however, came in the only poll that asked specifically about support for the freeze presuming that it could not be verified. If either the United States or the Soviet Union "could cheat" on the freeze, according to a CBS/*New York Times* poll in 1982, 71 percent of the public would oppose it (table 41).

Moreover, Americans apparently believed the Soviets (but not the United States) would cheat on a freeze agreement. By clear and often overwhelming majorities, Americans simply did not trust the Soviets to live up to any sort of arms control pact (tables 37, 38, 40, 43, 44, 45, 49, and 51).[6] Furthermore, the public doubted that Soviet cheating could be detected, either because we lacked the means of verification or because the Soviets would not allow such measures as on-site inspection (tables 46, 47, 48, and 52). Taken together, of course, these findings raise fundamental doubts about the public's support for an actual freeze agreement. While the public may have supported the general concept of a freeze, they insisted upon bilateral compliance while expressing strong doubts that such compliance could be verified.

GROUP 5: IMPORTANCE OF THE NUCLEAR BALANCE

The public's perception of the nuclear balance also had significant effects on support for the freeze, although the findings seem somewhat contradictory. The Penn and Schoen poll of registered voters in April of 1983 revealed that only 36 percent believed that a freeze would be "tilted in favor of the Soviet Union," while 33 percent thought it would be "fair to both countries" (table 63). Similarly, a series of Roper polls not only found less than a majority convinced of Soviet nuclear superiority, but also some decline in that belief between 1980 and 1984 (table 66). These views, of course, conform with pro-freeze arguments about the nuclear balance and the effects of a freeze. Yet at least three other polls suggest that the public agreed with the Reagan administration that an immediate freeze would leave the United States at a nuclear disadvantage. In two ABC/*Washington Post* polls, substantial majorities agreed that a "freeze now" would leave the Soviets with a nuclear advantage (table 54), while 60 percent of the respondents in a Roper poll (table 64) found "very convincing" or "somewhat convincing" the argument that a freeze would leave the Soviets "ahead" of the United States.

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[6] A substantial minority (40 percent) also thought that the United States would cheat on a freeze agreement (table 39), but that is still far fewer than the number convinced that the Soviets would cheat.

Polls assessing the importance of the nuclear balance likewise seem contradictory, although a certain logic may be discerned in the findings. Some polls showed about half of all respondents agreeing that the United States already had more than enough nuclear weapons to deter or destroy the Soviet Union (tables 55, 56, and 60). In two ABC/*Washington Post* polls, for example, nearly 80 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement "It doesn't matter if the United States or the Soviet Union is ahead in nuclear weapons because both sides have more than enough to destroy each other no matter who attacks first" (table 53). Several other polls, however, produced large majorities agreeing that it was important, necessary, or in the best interests of peace that the United States maintain nuclear equality, even superiority, over the Soviet Union (tables 59, 61, and 65). Even when forced to choose between a "continuation of the nuclear arms build-up"or the United States "falling behind the Soviet Union," more Americans declared the latter a greater threat to peace (table 58). One might speculate that at least some Americans considered nuclear parity important for deterrent purposes or for enticing the Soviets to negotiate—even if it made little difference from a military standpoint. Whatever the explanation, the important point is that the public rejected a freeze that left the Soviets with an advantage. When polls specifically assessed support for a freeze assuming that it would leave the Soviets stronger, support for the idea dropped dramatically to between 30 percent and 36 percent (tables 57 and 62).

GROUP 6: LIKELIHOOD OF ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT

In all the media reports of strong public support for a nuclear freeze, one rarely found mention of public attitudes toward the likelihood of the two sides negotiating such an agreement. A number of the poll questions addressed the matter, however, and the results revealed yet another important point about public support for the freeze. In a nutshell, the findings reveal that, while the public may have supported a freeze, many doubted that the two sides would be able to negotiate such an agreement; indeed, large numbers of Americans doubted that any sort of arms control agreement could be negotiated with the Soviets (tables 69, 70, 71, 72, and 73). In general, the public tended to believe that the leaders of the Soviet Union did not share the desire of American leaders to control nuclear arms (tables 74, 75, and 76), and they doubted that Soviet leaders would be as likely as American leaders to agree specifically to a freeze (tables 67 and 68).

GROUP 7: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE NUCLEAR DEBATE

Conclusions about public support for the freeze also must be qualified with the observation that the public had mixed feelings about its own role in the nuclear debate. On the one hand, the polls showed large majorities rejecting the notion that the public should be excluded from the decision making—that such matters should be left to political leaders and/or experts (tables 77, 85, and 86). On the other hand, the CBS/*New York Times* poll of May 1982 revealed that the public had considerable doubts about its own competence to decide such a "complicated" issue (table 81), and a number of other polls revealed surprisingly little interest in the matter—surprising, at least, in light of all the talk about a "grass-roots" uprising.

Substantial minorities, ranging from 42 percent to 45 percent, confessed that they had not paid "much attention" to the freeze debate or that they had not "heard or read anything" at all about a proposed freeze (tables 78 and 82). During the period of most intensive media coverage—coverage often emphasizing the public's involvement in the debate—basic awareness of the issue never exceeded 57 percent (table 78). To these findings could be added a *Newsweek* poll (conducted by Gallup but missing from the Roper Center data set), which found that only 43 percent of the public had even heard of a nuclear freeze movement! Ironically, *Newsweek* reported this finding as a footnote to a major story on "the groundswell of support for a freeze" (Newsweek 1982, pp. 21, 24).

Finally, a number of polls suggest that many Americans had major reservations about the activists behind the freeze campaign. While the public expressed considerable sympathy for the general idea of protesting against the arms race (tables 79 and 83), a large majority said they would refuse an invitation to join a freeze group (table 80). Furthermore, a majority doubted that the freeze campaign constituted "a real grass roots movement." Rejecting media claims that the freeze had attracted "a new breed" of protestor, less radical and more thoughtful than the protestors of the past (see, e.g., CBS News 1981, p. 9), most Americans agreed that the freeze movement consisted of "peope who often have been involved in most protest movements in the past" (table 87). Most important, few Americans thought the freeze movement helped the cause of arms control. As revealed in the *LA Times* poll of April 1983 (table 84), only 25 percent of Americans thought the freeze movement helped our efforts to negotiate arms reductions with the Soviets, while 31 percent thought it hurt and 28 percent thought it had no effect at all.

All in all, then, we have a surprising portrait of public opinion on the freeze. Clearly, an overwhelming majority of Americans favored arms control and the general concept of "freezing" the arms race. But there is no evidence of a radical transformation in public attitudes between 1980 and 1984, and the public had serious practical reservations about the freeze proposal itself. Indeed, at least two polls (table 71) showed that 80 percent of Americans doubted that a freeze on nuclear weapons could be negotiated in their lifetime! Moreover, the public simply did not care all that much about the issue. The freeze may have been an appealing metaphor, but most Americans had surprisingly little knowledge about, or interest in, the freeze initiative.

Conclusion

As Roll and Cantril (1980, pp. 153–54) have argued, polling can "enhance the strength of the democratic process by improving communication between the leader and the led." Yet as Smith and Hogan (1987, pp. 28–29) have pointed out, "complex and important issues of public policy can be illuminated only by polls which are commensurately subtle, specific, and extensive." In polling on the freeze, the pollsters generated extensive data. But they based their interpretations largely upon only the most general of questions, ignoring important subtleties of opinion and questions of knowledge and salience.

Some of the difficulties with polling on the freeze involved persistent problems of question wording. First, many of the freeze questions were simply too general. Some arguably measured little more than the public's general antipathy toward nuclear weapons and the arms race. As such, they provided little guidance in a policy debate over competing arms control measures, and they glossed over the public's qualified support for the freeze—the fact that the public supported only a bilateral, verifiable, and balanced freeze agreement. Second, the pollsters, as usual, posed widely varying questions and changed questions frequently. As a result, the findings varied dramatically and are difficult to compare. Differences in question wording might even account for some of the supposed "trends" in public opinion during this period.

Third, the pollsters continue to ignore the hazards of "informing" respondents about the issues. Some questions examined in this study misrepresented altogether the issue they purported to address (e.g., the questions about Kennan's "fifty percent" plan). Others risked bias by presenting pro- and anti-freeze arguments; curiously, some questions included only pro-freeze arguments. In any case, the whole practice of "informing" respondents remains hard to justify. The business of polling should be to assess public opinion, not to predict what the public might think if exposed to selected "information."

Dramatic imperatives—the dictates of a "good story"—undoubtedly encouraged news stories about a "grass-roots" movement "sweeping" the nation, particularly one destined to clash with the Reagan administration. And partisanship no doubt fueled talk in Congress about a public suddenly "reawakened to the danger of nuclear war" (U.S. Congress 1983, p. H1210). Ultimately, however, the pollsters themselves must bear responsibility, not only for problems of question wording, but also for interpretations that went well beyond their own data.

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Polling on the "Freeze"

GROUP I: SUPPORT FOR ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS AND GENERAL DISARMAMENT

1. Audits and Surveys: Do you favor or oppose a United States government effort to reach new agreements with the Soviet Union in reducing both nations' nuclear arms?

	11/17–22/81	9/17–21/83
	Adult	*Adult*
N	1,200	1,205
Favor	77	70
Oppose	10	18
No opinion	13	12

2. Gallup: Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built?

	5/8–11/81
	Adult
N	1,519
Favor	47
Oppose	44
No opinion	9

3. Gallup: (Asked after a question about support for a UN referendum to be held in every country to vote for disarmament.) If a referendum were held in the U.S., how would you vote—for or against nuclear disarmament?

*If such a referendum (called for by the United Nations and held in every nation) were held in the U.S. (United States), how would you vote—for or against nuclear disarmament?

	5/8–11/81 *Adult*	*9/18–21/81 *Adult*
N	1,519	1,540
For	59	52
Against	30	37
No opinion	12	11

4. Gallup: Would you approve or disapprove if President Reagan made a proposal to the Soviet Union that both countries reduce their present stock of nuclear weapons by 50%?

	11/13–16/81 *Adult*
N	?
Approve	76
Disapprove	19
No opinion	5

5. Harris: Now let me read you some statements about control of nuclear weapons. For each, tell me if you agree or disagree. . . . All countries that have nuclear weapons should agree to destroy them.

*Would you favor or oppose all countries that have nuclear weapons agreeing to destroy them?

	3/12–16/82 *Adult*	*5/25–30/82 *Adult*	*3/17–20/83 *Adult*	*4/20–25/83 *Adult*
N	1,249	1,251	1,254	1,253
Agree/favor	61	74	80	80
Disagree/oppose	37	22	17	16
Not sure	2	4	3	4

6. Harris: Would you favor or oppose every country that has nuclear weapons banning the production, storage and use of those nuclear weapons?

	3/5–21/82 *Adult*	5/25–30/82 *Adult*	3/17–20/83 *Adult*	9/9–14/83 *Adult*	11/9–14/83 *Adult*	3/8–20/84 *Adult*
N	1,599	1,251	1,254	1,255	1,252	1,506
Favor	73	70	69	68	66	60
Oppose	23	25	25	27	29	34
Not sure	5	5	6	5	5	6

7. Harris: Do you favor or oppose the U.S. and Russia negotiating an effective nuclear arms agreement that would call for a real cutback in the nuclear weapons each country has?

	4/20–25/83 *Adult*
N	1,253
Favor	87
Oppose	10
Not sure	3

8. Harris: Now here are some agreements the U.S. (United States) and the Soviet Union might make. Would you favor or oppose each of these agreements? . . . An agreement between the two countries to reduce their total number of nuclear warheads and missiles by 50 percent over a five-year period.

	11/26–29/84 *Adult*
N	1,255
Favor	84
Oppose	13
Not sure	3

9. *Los Angeles Times:* Do you think the United States should meet with the Soviet Union this year to try to reach agreement on nuclear weapons, or do you think the United States should put off a meeting this year until we are in a better bargaining position—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
Meet	51
Put off	31
Haven't heard enough	14
Not sure	3
Refused	1

10. Roper: There are many problems facing our nation today. But at certain times some things are more important than others, and need more attention from our Federal Government than others. I'd like to know for each of the things on this list whether you think it is something the government should be making a major effort on now, or something the government should be making some effort on now, or something not needing any particular government effort now. . . . Trying to seek agreements with other nations to limit nuclear weapons.

	6/5–12/80 *Adult*	5/30–6/6/81 *Adult*	6/5–12/82 *Adult*	5/29–6/3/84 *Adult*
N	2,006	2,003	2,000	2,000
Major effort	60	63	70	71
Some effort	29	26	23	21
Need no particular effort	7	7	4	5
Don't know	3	4	3	4

GROUP 2: SUPPORT FOR THE CONCEPT OF A NUCLEAR FREEZE

11. ABC/*Washington Post:* Well, would you approve or disapprove of a freeze on nuclear weapons by both the United States and the Soviet Union? . . . Would you say you approve/disapprove strongly or approve/disapprove somewhat?

*(Asked after respondents had rated an equal number of arguments for and against the freeze.) We have just gone over some reasons given for and against the proposal for a nuclear freeze by both the U.S. and the Soviet Union. With those reasons in mind, let me ask you once more: would you approve or disapprove of a freeze on nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet

Union? . . . Would you say you approve/disapprove strongly or approve/disapprove somewhat?)

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*	*Repeat	4/8–12/83 *Adult*	9/22–26/83 *Adult*	*Repeat
N	1,521		1,516	1,506	
Approve strongly	61	51	64	63	55
Approve somewhat	15	20	19	17	22
Disapprove somewhat	6	9	6	8	8
Disapprove strongly	14	16	10	9	12
Don't know/refused	4	3	3	3	2

12. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . Stopping the arms race is so important that we should have a nuclear freeze no matter how risky it seems.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Agree	50
Disagree	41
Don't know	9

13. CBS/*New York Times:* Do you favor or oppose the United States agreeing to a "nuclear freeze" with the Soviet Union—that is, putting a stop to the testing, production and installation of additional nuclear weapons by both sides?

*Do you (favor/oppose) the freeze strongly or only somewhat?

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*	9/13–18/82 *Reg voters*
N	1,470	78%/1,664
Favor	72	69
Oppose	21	25
No answer	7	6

	*6/20–26/83 *Adult*	*9/14/83 *Adult*
	1,365	705
Favor strongly	50	39
Favor somewhat	19	19
Oppose somewhat	10	13
Oppose strongly	12	14
No answer	9	15

14. CBS/*New York Times:* What if a nuclear freeze would result in the United States and the Soviet Union having about an equal amount of nuclear strength, would you favor or oppose such a nuclear freeze? (Asked only of Oppose/No answer subsample and computed on the basis of the full sample.)

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Favor	87
Oppose	9
No opinion	4

15. CBS/*New York Times:* What if both the United States and the Soviet Union could catch the other country if it were cheating on the agreement—would you favor or oppose such a nuclear freeze? (Asked only of Oppose/No answer subsample and computed on the basis of the full sample.)

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Favor	83
Oppose	12
No opinion	5

16. CBS/*New York Times:* Which do you think would be more dangerous for the United States—agreeing to a nuclear weapons freeze, or continuing to build more nuclear weapons?

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Freeze	39
Continuing to build	46
Both/neither (vol.)	4
No opinion	11

17. Gallup (for *Newsweek*): The advocates of a nuclear freeze say that both the United States and the Soviet Union already have enough nuclear weapons to destroy each other and want both sides to ban all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons. What is your view of the nuclear-freeze movement?

	3/17–18/82 *Aware adult*
N	43% of 757
Strongly favor	30
Favor	38
Oppose	17
Strongly oppose	8
Don't know	7

18. Gallup: Would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for an immediate, verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons?

	11/5–8/82 *Adult*	3/11–14/83 *Adult*	5/13–16/83 *Adult*	6/15–16/83 *Adult*	11/18–12/4/83 *Adult*
N	1,540	1,558	1,540	760	1,504 + 514
Favor	71	70	75	71	77
Oppose	20	21	16	21	13
No opinion	9	9	8	8	10

19. Gallup: This card lists various proposals being discussed in this country today. Would you tell me whether you generally favor or generally oppose each of these proposals? . . . An agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union for an immediate, verifiable freeze on testing and production of nuclear weapons.

	9/28–10/1/84 *Adult*
N	1,590
Favor	78
Oppose	18
No opinion	4

20. Gallup (for *Newsweek*): The advocates of a nuclear freeze say that both the United States and the Soviet Union already have enough nuclear weapons to destroy each other and want both sides to ban all testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons. What is your view?

	1/17–19/83
	Adult
N	754
Strongly favor	30
Favor	34
Oppose	19
Strongly oppose	10
Don't know	7

21. Harris: Would you favor or oppose Congress passing a resolution that would call upon the United States to negotiate a nuclear freeze agreement with the Soviet Union under which both sides would ban the future production, storage, and use of their nuclear weapons?

	3/17–20/83	4/20–25/83	9/9–14/83	11/4–7/83	12/27–30/83	7/2–7/84	7/20–24/83
	Adult	*Adult*	*Adult*	*Adult*	*Adult*	*Likely vote*	*Likely vote*
N	1,254	1,253	1,255	1,250	1,267	1,259	78%/1,620
Favor	79	81	77	75	71	69	68
Oppose	16	15	20	19	23	24	23
Not sure	5	4	3	6	6	7	9

22. Harris: Do you favor or oppose . . . the U.S. negotiating with Russia a verifiable freeze on the production, storage and use of nuclear weapons?

	6/12–14/84	
	Adult	
N	1,256	
	Ages 20–36	*Ages 50–64*
Favor	70	64
Oppose	27	27
Not sure	3	9

23. *LA Times:* At the present time, would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear weapons—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say? (If favor.) What kind of an agreement would you favor most: an agreement not to build any more nuclear weapons in the future . . . or an agreement to reduce the number of nuclear weapons on both sides . . . or would you favor an agreement to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built?

*At the present time, would you favor or oppose an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union on nuclear weapons—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say? (If favor.) Which kind of agreement would you favor most: an agreement not to build any more nuclear weapons in the future—in other words, freeze nuclear weapons . . . or an agreement to reduce the number of weapons on both sides . . . or would you favor any agreement to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built? (Allows multiple choices.)

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*	*7/4–8/82 *Adult*
N	1,503	1,102
Freeze	18	[illegible]
Reduce	16	39
Destroy	22	42
Oppose an agreement	11	18
Haven't heard enough	28	12
Not sure	4	4
Refused	1	. . .

24. *LA Times:* In some areas of the country, there is an effort to place a petition on the ballot that would urge the United States government to propose to the government of the Soviet Union that both countries agree to immediately halt the testing, production and further deployment of all nuclear weapons, missiles and delivery systems in a way that can be checked and verified by both sides. Supporters of this petition say our government needs to know that Americans do not want the development of more nuclear weapons. Opponents say it would halt production at a time when the United States is behind Russia. If such a nuclear freeze were being voted on today in your area, do you think you would vote for it or vote against it? (If undecided.) Well, as of today, would you lean more in favor of a nuclear weapons freeze or more against it?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
For	52
Lean for	5
Lean against	5
Against	33
Not sure	5
Refused	. . .

25. *LA Times:* Do you support or oppose the nuclear freeze movement which calls for the immediate halt to the testing, production and further deployment of all nuclear weapons, missiles and delivery systems in a way that can be checked and verified by both sides?

	4/4–10/83 *Adults*
N	1,233
Support	60
Oppose	29
Not sure	9
Refused	2

26. *LA Times:* Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of a freeze on nuclear weapons development?

*Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of a freeze on all nuclear weapons development in a way that can be verified by both sides?

	9/18–22/83 *Adult*	*11/12–17/83 *Adult*	*2/4–9/84 *Adult*	*4/28–5/3/84 *Reg voters*
N	1,653	2,004	1,512	1,898
Approve strongly	33	55	55	56
Approve somewhat	16	18	24	21
Disapprove somewhat	14	7	7	7
Disapprove strongly	25	12	7	8
Not sure	11	7	7	8
Refused	1	1	. . .	. . .

27. NBC/AP: Would you favor a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons in this country, or do you think the United States should continue to produce nuclear weapons?

	12/14–15/81 *Adult*
N	1,602
Favor freeze	34
Favor if other countries do (vol.)	6
Continue to produce	49
Not sure	11

28. NBC/AP: Would you favor or oppose a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons in both the United States and the Soviet Union?

	3/29–30/82 *Adult*	5/10–11/82 *Adult*	6/14–15/82 *Adult*	10/18–19/82 *Adult*	8/9–10/83 *Adult*
N	1,603	1,599	1,597	1,595	1,594
Favor	74	83	78	75	70
Oppose	18	14	16	16	23
Not sure	8	3	6	9	7

29. Penn and Schoen: Do you favor or oppose a freeze on all further development of nuclear weapons by both the United States and the Soviet Union?

	6/12–14/82 *Reg voters*	4/23–24/83 *Reg voters*
N	1,000	1,003
Favor	79	70
Oppose	18	23
Don't know	4	7

30. Yankelovich: Would you favor or oppose a city or state resolution which would urge the United States government and the government of the Soviet Union to halt the testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons systems with verification safeguards for both countries?

	3/16–18/82 *Reg voters*	10/5–7/82 *Reg voters*
N	1,019	1,010
Favor	70	76
Oppose	24	19
Not sure (vol.)	6	5

GROUP 3: SUPPORT FOR UNILATERAL ACTIONS

31. Gallup: Suppose that on election day, November 2 [1982], you could vote on key issues as well as candidates. Please tell me how you would vote on

each of these propositions. . . . A freeze on the production of nuclear weapons whether or not the Soviet Union agrees to do the same.

*Would you favor or oppose a freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons at this time if the Soviet Union does not agree to a freeze?

**Do you favor or oppose a freeze on the production of nuclear weapons whether or not the Soviet Union agrees to do the same?

	9/10–17/82	*5/13–16/83	**11/18–12/4/83
	Adult	*Adult*	*Adult*
N	1,486	1,540	2,018
Favor	45	22	23
Oppose	55	68	68
No opinion	Not asked	10	9

32. Harris: Let me ask you about some things that have been suggested to control the nuclear arms race. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose such a step. . . . The U.S. should not produce any new nuclear weapons even if the Russians continue to produce them.

	3/12–16/82
	Adult
N	1,249
Favor	23
Oppose	74
Not sure	3

33. Harris: Would you favor or oppose the United States deciding to gradually dismantle our nuclear weapons before getting agreement from other countries to do the same?

	3/5–21/82	3/17–20/83	4/20–25/83
	Adult	*Adult*	*Adult*
N	1,599	1,254	1,253
Favor	15	19	17
Oppose	82	78	78
Not sure	3	3	5

34. Harris: In the current debate over east-west nuclear weapons, which of the following best expresses your personal view about what the West should do? . . . Give up all nuclear weapons regardless of whether the Soviet Union does, introduce no more nuclear weapons, not even if the Soviet Union does, introduce just enough nuclear weapons to create a balance between east and west until an acceptable agreement can be concluded, introduce more nuclear weapons than the Soviet Union has introduced, in order to establish and maintain nuclear superiority.

	10/5–11/83
	Adult
N	1,246
Give up all regardless	4
Introduce no more	8
Introduce enough to balance	63
Introduce more for superiority	20
No answer	5

35. NBC/AP: Do you think the United States should move toward nuclear disarmament on its own . . . only if the Soviet Union agrees to disarm as well . . . or don't you think the United States should move toward nuclear disarmament at all?

	12/14–15/81	3/29–30/82	5/10–11/82	6/14–15/82
	Adult	*Adult*	*Adult*	*Adult*
N	1,602	1,603	1,599	1,597
On its own	12	14	14	15
Only if Soviet Union does	51	50	50	58
Should not disarm	27	26	28	20
Not sure	10	10	8	7

36. Public Agenda Foundation: It would be an acceptable risk for the U.S. to . . . declare a six month freeze on nuclear weapons development to see if the Soviets will follow suit, even if they might take advantage of it.

	5/21–29/84
	Adult
N	505
Agree	61
Disagree	36
Not sure	4

GROUP 4: IMPORTANCE OF VERIFICATION

37. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The Soviet Union would try to cheat on any nuclear freeze agreement and get an advantage over the U.S.

	4/21–25/82	9/22–26/83
	Adult	*Adult*
N	1,521	1,506
Agree	80	80
Disagree	13	14
Don't know	7	7

38. ABC/*Washington Post:* If there were such an agreement to freeze nuclear weapons do you think the Soviet Union would cheat on that agreement or not?

	11/3–7/83
	Adult
N	1,505
USSR would cheat	79
USSR would not cheat	14
Don't know	7

39. ABC/*Washington Post:* Do you think the United States would cheat on such a nuclear weapons freeze or not?

	11/3–7/83
	Adult
N	1,505
US would cheat	40
US would not cheat	53
Don't know	7

40. Audits and Surveys: If the U.S. and the Soviet Union did come to a new agreement to reduce both nations' nuclear arms, how confident or not are you that the Russians would live up to this agreement?

	9/17–21/83
	Adult
N	1,205
Very confident	2
Somewhat confident	13
Not too confident	36
Not at all confident	43
No opinion	6

41. CBS/*New York Times:* What if either the United States or the Soviet Union could cheat on the number of its nuclear weapons without being detected by the other side—would you favor or oppose such a nuclear freeze? (Asked only of those supporting a freeze or who had no opinion in a previous question and computed for whole sample.)

	5/19–23/82
	Adult
N	1,470
Favor	18
Oppose	71
No opinion	11

42. Gallup (for *Newsweek*): The major problem in arms control is the difficulty in verifying whether the other side is complying with the agreement. Some people feel that verification is essential for such an agreement. Others feel that it is more important for the United States to halt the growth of its nuclear arsenal even if we cannot be sure the other side is doing the same. Which is more important in your view?

	3/17–18/82
	Adult
N	757
Verification	67
Halting growth	25
Don't know	8

43. Gallup: How likely do you think the Soviet Union would be to abide by such an agreement (not to build any more nuclear weapons in the future)—very likely, fairly likely, or not at all likely?

	5/8–11/81
	Adult
N	1,519
Very likely	6
Fairly likely	27
Not at all likely	60
No opinion	7

44. Gallup: How likely do you think the Soviet Union would be to abide by such an agreement (to destroy all nuclear weapons that have already been built)—very likely, fairly likely, or not at all likely?

	5/8–11/81 *Adult*
N	1,519
Very likely	4
Fairly likely	16
Not at all likely	73
No opinion	7

45. Gallup: If a nuclear arms treaty were made between the Soviet Union and the United States, do you think the Soviet Union would be likely to live up to this agreement, or not?

	7/13–16/84 *Adult*
N	1,532
Yes, would	17
No, would not	74
No opinion	9

46. Gallup: Do you think it would or would not be possible to set up a system for verifying or checking whether the Soviet Union is living up to the terms of a nuclear freeze agreement?

	11/5–8/82 *Adult*
N	1,540
Yes, would	39
No, would not	47
No opinion	14

47. Gallup: Do you think the Soviet Union will or will not agree to on-site inspection of nuclear weapons in their nation?

	5/13–16/83 *Adult*
N	1,540
Will agree	10
Will not agree	78
No opinion	12

48. Harris: One of the problems in any nuclear arms control agreement between the U.S. (United States) and Russia is the question of verification—how to be sure each side is living up to what has been agreed upon. Do you think it is possible or not to come to a nuclear arms control agreement with the Russians, under which each side would be able to accurately determine if the other is living up to the agreement?

	11/26–29/84 *Adult*
N	1,255
Possible	40
Not possible	55
Not sure	5

49. *LA Times:* If the United States and the Soviet Union were to reach agreement on nuclear weapons, do you think the Soviet Union could be trusted to keep its part of the bargain, or not—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*	7/4–8/82 *Adult*
N	1,503	1,102
Could be trusted	17	17
Could not be trusted	66	68
Haven't heard enough	9	8
Not sure	7	7
Refused	1	. . .

50. Public Agenda Foundation: It would be an acceptable risk for the U.S. to . . . sign an arms control agreement with the Soviets, even if foolproof verification can't be guaranteed.

	5/21–29/84 *Adult*
N	505
Agree	56
Disagree	40
Not sure	5

51. Roper: Here are some arguments that have been made against an immediate nuclear freeze. (Card shown respondent.) For an argument to be convincing it has to be both important and true. If it isn't important, or isn't true it isn't convincing. Would you tell me for each of those arguments whether you find it a very convincing argument against an immediate nuclear freeze, or somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing? . . . The Soviet Union cannot be trusted to live up to the terms of a nuclear freeze agreement.

	4/23–30/83 *Adult*
N	½ of 2,000
Very convincing	40
Somewhat convincing	26
Not very convincing	16
Not at all convincing	10
Don't know	7

52. Roper: Here are some arguments that have been made against an immediate nuclear freeze. (Card shown respondent). For an argument to be convincing it has to be both important and true. If it isn't important, or isn't true it isn't convincing. Would you tell me for each of those arguments whether you find it a very convincing argument against an immediate nuclear freeze, or somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing? . . . A freeze would be a real gamble because neither side would know whether the other side was living up to the agreement.

	4/23–30/83 *Adult*
N	½ of 2,000
Very convincing	27
Somewhat convincing	26
Not very convincing	23
Not at all convincing	12
Don't know	13

GROUP 5: IMPORTANCE OF THE NUCLEAR BALANCE

53. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . It doesn't matter if the United States or the Soviet Union is ahead in nuclear weapons because both sides have more than enough to destroy each other no matter who attacks first.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*	9/22–26/83 *Adult*
N	1,521	1,506
Agree	79	77
Disagree	16	17
Don't know	5	6

54. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The Soviet Union would have an advantage over the United States in nuclear weapons if both countries agreed to a freeze now.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*	9/22–26/83 *Adult*
N	1,521	1,506
Agree	58	55
Disagree	29	32
Don't know	13	13

55. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The U.S. should continue developing nuclear weapons because the ones we have now are not enough to make the Russians afraid to attack the U.S. or its allies.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Agree	43
Disagree	49
Don't know	8

56. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The

U.S. already has thousands of nuclear weapons, so new ones would not give us or our allies any more security than we now have against an attack by the Soviet Union.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Agree	50
Disagree	40
Don't know	10

57. CBS/*New York Times:* What if a nuclear freeze would result in the Soviet Union having somewhat greater nuclear strength than the United States—would you favor or oppose such a freeze? (Asked of those who favored or had no opinion on a freeze in a previous question and computed for whole sample.)

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Favor	30
Oppose	60
No opinion	10

58. Gallup: In your opinion, which of the following increases the chance of nuclear war more—a continuation of the nuclear arms build-up here and in the Soviet Union, or the U.S. falling behind the Soviet Union in nuclear weaponry?

	3/11–14/83 *Adult*	5/13–16/83 *Adult*
N	1,558	1,540
Continuation of build-up	38	31
US falling behind	47	51
No opinion	15	17

59. Harris: Let me ask you about some things that have been suggested to control the nuclear arms race. For each, tell me if you favor or oppose such a step. . . . If we are stronger than the Russians in nuclear weapons, then the chances of keeping the peace are greater.

	3/12–16/82 *Adult*
N	1,249
Favor	61
Oppose	35
Not sure	4

60. *LA Times:* Do you think the United States needs more nuclear weapons for its defense, or do you think the United States now possesses enough nuclear weapons to destroy its enemies?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
More	31
Enough	50
Not sure	18
Refused	1

61. NBC/AP: In thinking about the United States' national defense, how important is it to you that the United States produce as many nuclear weapons as the Soviet Union does?

	5/10–11/82 *Adult*
N	1,599
Very important	42
Somewhat important	34
Not important	21
Not sure	3

62. Penn and Schoen: Would you favor or oppose a freeze on all further development of nuclear weapons by both the United States and the Soviet Union, if this proposal put the Soviet Union ahead of the U.S. in terms of the strength of its nuclear arsenal?

	6/12–14/82 *Reg voters*	4/23–24/83 *Reg voters*
N	1,000	1,003
Favor	36	35
Oppose	57	50
Don't know	8	15

63. Penn and Schoen: Do you think a nuclear weapons freeze at current levels would be fair to both countries, would be tilted in favor of the United States, or would be tilted in favor of the Soviet Union?

	4/23–24/83 *Reg voters*
N	1,003
Fair to both	33
Tilted in favor of US	10
Tilted in favor of USSR	36
Don't know/depends	21

64. Roper: Here are some arguments that have been made against an immediate nuclear freeze. (Card shown respondent.) For an argument to be convincing it has to be both important and true. If it isn't important, or isn't true it isn't convincing. Would you tell me for each of those arguments whether you find it a very convincing argument against an immediate nuclear freeze, or somewhat convincing, not very convincing, or not at all convincing? . . . A freeze now would leave the Soviet Union ahead of the U.S. (United States) in nuclear capability.

	4/23–30/83 *Adult*
N	½ of 2,000
Very convincing	30
Somewhat convincing	30
Not very convincing	19
Not at all convincing	9
Don't know	12

65. Roper: Do you think it is necessary that the United States be stronger than Russia in nuclear arms capability, or just as strong as Russia, or doesn't the

United States need to be as strong as Russia as long as it has enough nuclear arms to knock Russia out?

	9/27–10/4/80 *Adult*	10/24–31/81 *Adult*	12/4–11/82 *Adult*
N	½ of 2,005	2,000	2,000
Stronger	58	51	41
Just as strong	31	36	41
Doesn't need to be as strong	8	10	15
Don't know	4	3	3

66. Roper: At the present time do you think the United States is ahead of Russia in terms of nuclear arms capability, about even with them, or behind Russia in nuclear military strength?

	9/27–10/4/80 *Adult*	10/24–31/81 *Adult*	4/24–5/1/82 *Adult*	12/4–11/82 *Adult*	4/18–28/84 *Adult*
N	½ of 2,005	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Ahead	15	16	12	14	15
About even	29	35	32	39	42
Behind	43	41	41	39	32
Don't know	13	9	15	9	10

GROUP 6: LIKELIHOOD OF ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT

67. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The U.S. government would never agree to a nuclear arms freeze.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*	9/22–26/83 *Adult*
N	1,521	1,506
Agree	31	28
Disagree	55	61
Don't know	14	11

68. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . The Soviet Union would never agree to a nuclear arms freeze.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Agree	50
Disagree	37
Don't know	13

69. Gallup: In your opinion how likely is it that the United States and the Soviet Union will be able to reach an agreement to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals in the near future?

	6/2–3/82 *Adult*
N	519
Very likely	7
Fairly likely	26
Not too likely	36
Not at all likely	27
Don't know	4

70. Harris: How likely do you think it is that superpowers such as the United States and Russia will move toward disarmament of their nuclear weapons in the near future?

	3/5–21/82 *Adult*	4/20–25/83 *Adult*	9/9–14/83 *Adult*
N	1,599	1,253	1,255
Very likely	13	12	11
Somewhat likely	27	35	34
Not very likely at all	57	49	53
Not sure	3	4	2

71. Harris: Do you think that (an end to the production, storage, and testing of all nuclear weapons by all countries on earth) will happen in your lifetime or not?

	11/23–28/82 *Adult*	12/8–12/83 *Adult*
N	1,256	1,249
Will happen	15	16
Will not happen	81	80
Not sure	4	4

72. Harris: How optimistic are you that the U.S. (United States) and Russia will come to an agreement anytime soon to . . . reduce nuclear weapons on each side—very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, not very optimistic, or not optimistic at all?

	6/2–7/84 *Likely voters*
N	1,259
Very optimistic	8
Somewhat optimistic	24
Not very optimistic	38
Not optimistic at all	28
Not sure	2

73. *LA Times:* Do you think that a meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union to try to reach agreement on nuclear weapons would end in success or do you think it would end in failure—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
Success	21
Neither (vol.)	9
Failure	45
Haven't heard enough	15
Not sure	10
Refused	. . .

74. *LA Times:* Do you think the leaders of the Soviet Union really want to reach agreement on nuclear weapons, or not—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
Want agreement	23
Don't want agreement	48
Haven't heard enough	15
Not sure	13
Refused	1

75. *LA Times:* Do you think the leaders of the United States really want to reach agreement on nuclear weapons, or not—or haven't you heard enough about that yet to say?

	3/14–17/82 *Adult*
N	1,503
Want agreement	52
Don't want agreement	25
Haven't heard enough	14
Not sure	8
Refused	1

76. NBC/AP: How likely do you think it is that the Soviets will agree to a bilateral agreement to reduce nuclear weapons?

	6/14–15/82 *Adult*
N	1,597
Very likely	8
Somewhat likely	31
Not likely at all	55
Not sure	6

GROUP 2: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE NUCLEAR DEBATE

77. ABC/*Washington Post:* I'm going to read a few statements that deal with a nuclear freeze. For each, I'd like you to tell me whether you agree with it, or disagree, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion on that statement. . . . U.S. government leaders can be trusted to make the right decision about a nuclear freeze without pressure from the public one way or the other.

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Agree	36
Disagree	57
Don't know	7

78. ABC/*Washington Post:* Recently there have been proposals that the United States and the Soviet Union both agree to halt, or "freeze," the testing, production and installation of nuclear weapons. Have you yourself heard or read anything about such a proposed freeze?

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*	4/8–12/83 *Adult*	9/22–26/83 *Adult*
N	1,521	1,516	1,506
Yes, have heard	57	56	54
No, have not heard	42	44	45
Don't know	. . .	1	1

79. ABC/*Washington Post:* Would you say you tend to approve or tend to disapprove of such groups? (that have organized in support of a freeze on nuclear weapons).

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Approve	52
Disapprove	34
Don't know	14

80. ABC/*Washington Post:* Would you join such a group (that has organized in support of a freeze on nuclear weapons) if invited, or not?

	4/21–25/82 *Adult*
N	1,521
Yes, would join	26
No, would not join	65
Don't know	9

81. CBS/*New York Times:* Do you think the public can understand the issues involved in a nuclear freeze well enough to vote on it, or is the question of a nuclear freeze too complicated for the public to decide?

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Public can understand	35
Too complicated	59
No opinion	6

82. CBS/*New York Times:* There's been a lot of discussion about a nuclear freeze—a proposed halt to the testing, production and installation of additional nuclear weapons. Have you been paying much attention to the issue of a nuclear freeze, or not?

	5/19–23/82 *Adult*
N	1,470
Yes, have been paying attention	53
No, have not been paying attention	45
No opinion	2

83. Harris: In many countries of the world, people have been demonstrating against the spread of nuclear weapons. In general, are you in sympathy with the anti-nuclear weapons movement or not?

	3/5–21/82 *Adult*	4/20–25/83 *Adult*
N	1,599	1,253
In sympathy	55	45
Not in sympathy	39	48
Not sure	6	7

84. *LA Times:* In the talks between the United States and Russia over nuclear weapons reduction, do you think the nuclear freeze movement in America hurts our bargaining position, or doesn't affect the talks one way or the other, or do you think the nuclear freeze movement helps our bargaining position with the Russians?

	4/4–10/83 *Adult*
N	1,233
Hurts	31
Doesn't affect	28
Helps	25
Not sure	14
Refused	2

85. Public Agenda Foundation: The subject of nuclear weapons is too complex for people like me to think about; that should be left to the President and the experts.

	5/21–29/84 *Adult*
N	505
Agree	21
Disagree	77
Not sure	1

86. Public Agenda Foundation: The issue of nuclear war is too important to leave only to the President and the experts; citizens must have a say in any decisions that are made.

	5/21–29/84 *Adult*
N	505
Agree	68
Disagree	29
Not sure	3

87. Yankelovich: There are many reports of people in the United States today speaking out and protesting against the nuclear arms race. Do you feel that this mostly represents a real grass roots movement, or mostly involves people who often have been involved in most protest movements in the past?

	6/8–10/82 *Reg voters*	12/8–9/82 *Reg voters*
N	1,010	1,019
Mostly represents real grass roots movement	38	32
Mostly protestors from the past	50	55
Not sure (vol.)	12	13

STABILITY AND CHANGE IN THE U.S. PUBLIC'S KNOWLEDGE OF POLITICS

MICHAEL X. DELLI CARPINI
SCOTT KEETER

Abstract The U.S. public's current knowledge about politics is compared with levels of knowlege in the 1940s and 1950s. Fourteen questions asked by Gallup on various surveys from 1945 to 1957 were included on a larger survey of political knowledge conducted by telephone in 1989 with a randomly selected sample of 610 adult U.S. residents. On 8 of the 14 items, the percentage answering correctly in 1989 was higher than in the earlier surveys (by 4–15 points). One item showed an increase of 1 percent, two were down 1 percent, and three others declined by 5 percent, 9 percent, and 10 percent. When level of education is controlled, however, levels of knowledge appear to have declined for most of the items. A reanalysis of some of the original Gallup data is used to estimate the effectiveness of schools in transmitting political information in 1989 compared with the earlier years.

An informed citizenry is an implicit requisite for any theory of democracy. However, public opinion surveys of the 1940s and 1950s consistently demonstrated the average citizen's limited knowledge concerning public affairs and the basic workings of parties, politics, and government (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1962, 1964; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1944). In 1962 and 1963 Erskine published four articles in *Public Opinion Quarterly* cataloging how informed the American citizenry was on a host of political and public concerns (Erskine 1962, 1963a, 1963b,

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 55:583–612 © 1991 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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1963c). The articles brought together national survey questions asked from 1947 through 1962.

Since the late 1950s the number and range of political knowledge questions asked on national surveys have declined precipitously. Using a national telephone survey, we have replicated several of the items reported by Erskine to document what, if any, changes have occurred in the U.S. public's political knowledge. First we summarize extant research on political knowledge, pointing out its conclusions as well as the shortcomings that result from a relative lack of current data. Next we discuss the design and validity of our survey and examine the willingness of respondents to complete a survey devoted mainly to a test of political knowledge. We then turn to the Gallup polls used in our comparisons, explaining adjustments that are necessary due to sampling bias. We follow with a comparison of marginals for 14 knowledge questions. Finally, we explore the changes in political knowledge (and lack thereof) in light of societal changes in educational achievement.

Prior Research

Is there any reason to believe that citizens should have different levels of political knowledge today as compared to 35 or 40 years ago? Such an expectation stems from societal changes that have occurred over the past 40 years. However, observers differ in their views of the impact of these changes.

On the one hand, the greater availability of public education and the concurrent rise in the average number of years of schooling achieved since the 1940s lead some to expect a more informed citizenry (Inglehart 1977). On the other hand, concerns about the quality of education have led others to suggest that mass education is failing (Bloom 1987; Hirsch 1988). Ravitch (1983) suggests that misuse of the notion of "progressive education" has made public education since 1945 much less effective than it might have been. And Janowitz (1983) argues that civic education in particular has declined since 1945.

Similar disagreements exist concerning the effects of mass communication. Some see the "information explosion" created by the electronic media as opening the door to a more sophisticated citizen (Abramson, Arterton, and Orren 1988; Barber 1984; Toffler 1980). Yet others argue that this development has split the population into the information poor and the information rich (Bell 1973; Burnham 1978). The emergence of television as the dominant source of public information, changes in the style and structure of campaigns, the decline in party organization, the proliferation of grass roots organizations and

PACs, generational change, and so forth either have been credited for strengthening citizenship or blamed for weakening it (Boyte 1980; Inglehart 1977; Janowitz 1983; Robinson 1976; Sabato 1981, 1984, 1988).

Despite its assumed importance and the debate concerning the impact of societal changes, knowledge is the least studied aspect of citizenship (Bennett 1989; Luskin 1987). Systematic data concerning political knowledge are relatively rare. This is especially true when one is interested in studying change in levels of knowledge. The tendency to survey about opinions rather than factual information was noted by Erskine in 1963, when she wrote that the polling field's "concern about how much people know has decreased almost to the vanishing point in the last few years" (p. 133).

Of course, political knowledge questions can be found on contemporary surveys. The National Election Studies, the General Social Surveys, Gallup, Roper, and the national media polls all periodically ask such questions. The utility of these data for studying change is limited, however, since the specific knowledge asked about varies from survey to survey. In addition, few surveys ask more than two or three questions that directly measure political information.

As a result of these limitations, researchers are forced to make concessions. Most analyses are limited to a single time period (Entman 1989; Glenn 1972; Hyman and Sheatsley 1947; Kuklinski, Metlay, and Key 1982; Owen and Stewart 1987; Sigelman and Yanarella 1986; Zeigler and Haltom 1989). Longitudinal analyses must depend on the few questions that are repeated over time, on different knowledge questions in different years, and/or measures that use perception, recognition, exposure, or education as surrogates for information (Bennett 1988, 1989; Kessel 1988; Neuman 1986; Smith 1970). In addition, longitudinal studies are necessarily limited to the time points for which data exist, regardless of the theoretical arguments concerning the expectation of change over the period in question.

Despite these constraints, a consensus has emerged concerning contemporary levels of political knowledge. Studies by Neuman (1986) and Bennett (1988, 1989), the three most systematic longitudinal analyses, suggest that knowledge is at best no greater than it was 2–4 decades ago and may have even declined on some measures. Our research, using a wider range of knowledge questions, confirms these findings.

Methods and Data

We conducted a national telephone survey of 610 randomly selected adults between March 21 and May 8, 1989. The questionnaire contained approximately one hundred items, 50 of which were factual questions about government and politics. Nonfactual questions included political trust and efficacy, political interest and participation, media use, party identification, ideology, opinions on issues, and demographics.

Selecting the knowledge questions was a multifaceted process. Replication of items from the Erskine articles was one criterion. A second criterion was to measure a range of substantive political knowledge, including government institutions and procedures, contemporary issues, civil rights and liberties, and current government policy. Out of the one hundred or so questions reported by Erskine, we chose 14 items for direct replication (those that covered a range of topics, that were still politically relevant, and that could be replicated over the phone). With minor exceptions, question wording was identical to that of the original. We do not claim that the questions on the survey reflect the only "facts" a citizen should know. We do think, however, that they measure several important types of political knowledge, ranging from understanding basic institutions and processes of government (e.g., knowing what is contained in the Fifth Amendment), to comprehending particular issues and policies (e.g., knowing what effect a high tariff on foreign goods might have), to keeping surveillance of the current personalities and partisan alignments in national politics (e.g., knowing the name of your current representative or which party controls the Senate).

Interviewing for the survey was conducted by a university-based survey research center using CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) and a commercially prepared random sample. Respondents within households were selected randomly by the CATI software following a household enumeration. The simple response rate was 38 percent, while the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO) rate, which is adjusted for "no answer" and "busy" outcomes, was 36 percent (see App. A). Interviews averaged 23 minutes in length. The sample was weighted on gender, race, and education according to 1986 population estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau. Weighted and unweighted demographics of the sample are shown in Appendix B.[1]

The low response rate raises concerns about the representativeness of the sample. The organization that conducted the survey has an average response rate of 68 percent and followed standard telephone field work practices in this study; for example, all numbers were called at least 12 times on different interviewing shifts before being abandoned. Conversion of refusals was attempted, although due to budget limitations, only about 60 percent of households that had initially refused were contacted a second time. Much of the nonresponse is attributable to a high rate of initial refusals, many of which occurred during the use of a stringent—and perhaps overly intrusive—process of household enumeration and respondent selection that was different from the one the organization normally used. However, nonresponse was not a result of respondent resistance to being tested on political knowledge, since the study was introduced as a survey on important issues; respondents who asked for more detail were told that the study dealt with politics and government. We recognize, however, that some individuals are averse to talking about public affairs in general, whether or not they would be tested on the subject.

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[1] The largest weight applied was 3.85 for black males with no high school diploma; the smallest weight was .479 for black females with some college education.

Despite the low response rate, the sample appears valid, based on a number of criteria. We compared key variables from our sample with surveys by two well-known organizations, the National Election Studies (NES) of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and the 1982, 1987, and 1989 General Social Surveys of National Opinion Research Center (NORC).[2] The samples were nearly identical in the distribution of partisanship and very similar—with one exception—in most reported levels of political activity, including turning out to vote, reading a daily newspaper, watching network television news, and discussing politics with family and friends.[3]

Knowledge questions available for comparison also indicate no serious bias. Compared with the 1987 General Social Surveys (GSS) sample, our sample was a little less able to name their governor (74 percent in our sample; 78 percent in the GSS) or House member (29 percent compared with 36 percent). Compared with the 1988 NES survey, our sample was a little more knowledgeable regarding partisan control of Congress—68 percent and 55 percent of our sample said that the Democrats had a majority in the U.S. House and Senate, compared with 59 percent and 54 percent in the NES survey.

Will Respondents Cooperate with Telephone Surveys Measuring Knowledge?

Relatively few surveys—especially telephone surveys—are designed to tap knowledge. No survey we found measured political knowledge as extensively as the present study. It is an axiom of the profession that surveys should avoid questions that respondents may interpret as stigmatizing: "Because the tradition of survey research emphasizes the development and maintenance of rapport with respondents, researchers are reluctant to ask factually oriented knowledge questions for fear of embarrassing interviewees. As a result, direct measurement of political knowledge is rare" (Neumann 1986, p. 15).

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[2] A table showing the detailed comparisons may be found in App. A.

[3] In our study, 44 percent reported that they follow politics "most of the time," while the 1988 NES percentage was half as large—22 percent (this figure has varied in the NES from 37 percent in 1976 to the figure of 22 percent observed in 1988). In the 1982 General Social Surveys (GSS)—the most recent GSS on which this item was asked—36 percent said they followed politics "most of the time."

Considering the length of the survey and the number of factual questions, data collection went reasonably well. Once the survey was underway, 95.6 percent of respondents completed it. Of the 28 who terminated, 23 did so during the knowledge questions (which began with the twenty-sixth item). Terminations were spread throughout the questionnaire, with many coming near the end of the survey. Interviewers were asked to rate the cooperativeness of respondents; 78 percent were rated as "very cooperative," 20 percent "somewhat cooperative," and 2 percent "not very" or "not at all cooperative."

One concern was that citizens might be knowledgeable about political matters that we did not ask about in our survey. To gauge this, we asked respondents at the conclusion of the interview if they thought our questions were a fair test of what they knew about politics. Ninety-four percent said "Yes," while 2 percent said "No" (the others said "Some were fair; others were unfair" or did not offer an opinion). Many respondents told the interviewer they were ashamed at how little they knew or that the test was hard. Many said they wanted a report of the results and gave their name and address.

The Gallup Surveys

Nearly all of the comparisons discussed below involve Gallup surveys conducted between 1945 and 1957. We obtained data sets for two Gallup surveys from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut and had the Roper Center produce frequencies and crosstabs on five others. Because the comparisons over time depend upon the validity of the sampling at both ends of the comparison, some discussion of the Gallup samples and our adjustments to them is warranted.

Many of the samples employed by Gallup in the 1940s as well as some used in the 1950s significantly underrepresented certain groups in the population, including females, nonwhites, southerners, and persons with low levels of education (Glenn 1975, p. I-36). Since each of these groups tends to manifest lower levels of political knowledge than their counterparts on many questions, the overall level of knowledge for the Gallup samples, compared with the general public, will be overstated to some extent.

Gallup data from the 1940s and 1950s stored at the Roper Center are unweighted, and no standard weighting scheme has been developed. The four 1947 Gallup data sets we examined had three major sampling flaws. First, individuals with low levels of education were underrepresented. Those without a high school diploma averaged 53 percent, compared with a population estimation (based on an extrapolation of census data) of nearly 70 percent. Second, nonwhites accounted for about 4 percent of the samples, compared with an estimated 9 percent in the population (in addition, there were almost no southern nonwhites in the sample). Third, the percentage of southerners ranged from 10 percent to 14 percent, compared with an estimated 28 percent nationally.

By comparison, the particular 1950s samples we used were relatively unbiased on these key demographics. Nonwhite representation averaged 8.5 percent in three samples examined (compared with an estimated 9.9 percent in the population), while southern residents accounted for 25–30 percent of the samples (vs. an estimated 26 percent in the population). Individuals without a high school diploma were still underrepresented but by a much smaller amount than in the 1940s (55–56 percent in the surveys compared with an estimated 60 percent in the population).

The sampling problems were apparently recognized by the Gallup organization in the 1940s, as all of the published marginals for knowledge items from the 1947 surveys we examined appear to have been adjusted downward by 4–7 percentage points (compared with frequencies calculated from the raw data). Perhaps because the samples for the 1950s surveys were much less biased than those of the 1940s, Gallup made no adjustment in the 1950s-published marginals, all of which matched the raw data at the Roper Center.[4]

We made two types of adjustments in the data reported here. First, the two data sets we acquired were weighted on education, race, and state population so that the resulting distributions matched estimated population parameters as closely as possible.[5] These weights were applied for calculating marginals reported in table 1 and for the logistic regression analysis reported in table 3. Second, the marginals reported in table 1 for the remaining questions (those for which we did not obtain the original data sets) were adjusted so that each educational group in the sample is weighted according to its estimated proportion in the population (see Glenn [1975] for a discussion of this technique). A further adjustment is made for region in 1947 where a strong relationship exists between knowledge and region. However, since race and region are related to education, the adjustment for education alone corrects nearly all of the bias. For the data reported in table 2, which are broken down by education, no adjustment was made.[6]

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[4] Officials at the Gallup organization were unable to confirm that adjustments in the published data had been made.

[5] Even though the male-female distribution in the samples was appropriate, gender was taken into account into the weighting since there were differences between men and women in educational achievement.

Change in Knowledge: Comparing Marginals over 40 Years

Table 1 presents the exact question wording and marginal percentages for the 14 questions asked in 1989 and in earlier years. Based on these comparisons, the public today appears a little more knowledgeable than in the 1940s and 1950s.[7] On 8 of the 14 items, the percentage answering correctly in 1989 was higher than in the earlier surveys (by 4–15 points). One item showed an increase of 1 percent, two were down 1 percent, and three others declined by 5 percent, 9 percent, and 10 percent.

More striking than the differences is the overall similarity. Only three items show increases greater than 10 percentage points (there were 15-point increases in those knowing what the first 10 amendments are called and that Congress could override a presidential veto, and a 12-point increase in ability to define "presidential veto"). Over 40 years, the level of public knowledge of some basic facts about the political system has remained remarkably stable.

Findings of the Gallup organization in its study of geographic literacy parallel ours, adding to our confidence that our sample is a valid one for comparison with Gallup data gathered 30 and 40 years ago. In 1988, Gallup replicated surveys of 1947–48 and concluded: "Overall, it appears that there has been no improvement over 40 years in the ability to identify countries and states from the maps among the total adult population" (National Geographic Society 1988).

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[6] To assess the need for adjustment in this table, we compared the weighted and unweighted results, using the data sets we had obtained. In 24 comparisons (six possible responses to the questions among four education groups), the mean difference between the weighted and unweighted result was −.2 of 1 percent; the median difference was 0. The largest observed difference between weighted and unweighted results was 5 percentage points (on defining a presidential veto) among individuals with no high school diploma.

[7] By 1952 Alben Barkley had served nearly 4 years as vice president, while Quayle had only been in office a few months in 1989 (though the controversy surrounding Quayle's nomination should also be taken into account). Also, in 1989 the Democrats had controlled the House for far longer (almost 35 years) than the Republicans had in 1947 when they took control for the first time in 15 years.

Table 1. Wording of Questions and Comparison of Marginals, 1940s/50s and 1989

		1947	1989
For how many years is a president of the United States elected—that is, how many years are there in one term of office?	Correct	92	96
	Incorrect or Don't know	8	4
Will you tell me what the term "veto" means to you? For example, what does it mean when a president vetoes a bill sent to him by Congress?	Correct answers	77	89
	Incorrect	...	5
	Don't know	23	6
Asked of those who answered correctly: If the president vetoes a bill, can Congress override his veto?	Yes	67	82
	No	4	3
	Don't know	6	4
	Don't know what a veto is	23	11
Asked of those who knew Congress could override a veto: How much of a majority is required for the Senate and House to override a presidential veto?	Two-thirds	43	42
	Other	...	21
	Don't know	57	37
		1952	1989
Will you tell me who the vice president of the United States is?	Correct	67	74
	Incorrect or Don't know	33	26
		1947	1989
Do you happen to know which party—the Democratic or Republican—has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives? 1989: As a result of the election last year, which party now has the most members in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington?	Correct	63	68
	Incorrect	10	16
	Don't know	27	16

Table 1 *(Continued)*

And do you happen to know which political party has the most members in the Senate? 1989: As a result of the election last year, which party now has the most members in the U.S. Senate?	Correct	56	55
	Incorrect	9	17
	Don't know	35	28
When you read about a business recession [1989: an economic recession], what does that mean to you? Correct answers included: "Economic slowdown." "Businesses not doing well; closing, failing." "Unemployment; unemployment increases."	Correct	51	57
	Incorrect or vague	. . .	22
	Don't know	49	21
		1946	1989
From what you've heard, what kind of an effect do you think a high American tax on foreign goods would have on our trade? Correct answers included: "U.S. would buy less from foreign countries." "Would make trade deficit go down; improve balance of trade." "Other countries would retaliate; trade war." "Create U.S. jobs; help U.S. industry; buy American."	Reasonably correct	51	52
	Don't know or Incorrect	49	48
		1954	1989
What are the first 10 amendments to the Constitution called?	Bill of Rights	31	46
	Incorrect	. . .	5
	Don't know	69	49

		1957	1989
What is the Fifth Amendment? [When you hear or read about the Fifth Amendment, what does it mean to you?]	Correct answer	41	50
	Incorrect or Don't know	59	50
		1945	1989
Do you happen to know the names of the two U.S. senators from your state?	Both correct	35	25
	One correct	57	55
	None	43	45
		1947	1989
Can you remember offhand the name of the U.S. congressman from your district? [Can you remember offhand the name of the person who represents your district in the U.S. House of Representatives—that is, your congressman or congresswoman?]	Correct	38	29
	Don't know	62	71
		1945	1989
Can you tell me the name of the current governor of your state?	Correct	79	74
	Incorrect or Don't know	21	26

SOURCES.—For 1989: telephone survey of 610 adult residents of the United States, conducted by the authors. For veto questions (1947): Gallup study #USAIPO 47-0396. For Bill of Rights and senators (1954): Gallup study #USAIPO 54-0526. Both Gallup data sets obtained from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. Name of the House member (1945) and effect of tariff on foreign trade (1946) from Erskine (1963a, 1963b). Name of governor (1945) from a Gallup survey (cited in Erskine 1963b). Other items from Gallup study tabulations produced by the Roper Center (AIPO 47-392, 47-393, 47-401, 52-491, 57-581).

NOTE.—Data for 1989 have been weighted on education, race, and gender according to estimates of the U.S. population. Gallup data for the Bill of Rights, naming senators, and knowledge of presidential veto have been weighted on education, gender, race, and region. The remaining Gallup data for 1945 and 1947 reflect an adjustment in which the distribution of educational achievement in the sample was weighted to conform with population estimates.

Change in Knowledge in Light of Change in Educational Achievement

In 1940, a few years before most of the surveys reported here were conducted, the median number of years of education was 8.6, three-fourths of the public had not finished high school, and only 10 percent had some college experience. By 1986 the median number of years of education was 12.6, with only one-fourth not having finished high school and 36 percent having had college experience.

In light of this phenomenal increase in education, and because political knowledge and education are associated with one another at the individual level, the aggregate comparisons presented above suggest a decline in knowledge among similarly educated persons. Using the Gallup data sets and analyses prepared by the Roper Center, we compared change over time in knowledge among individuals with the same level of education attainment. Table 2 presents these data along with the number of cases and the arithmetical difference between 1989 results and those from the earlier surveys.

The overall pattern is one of decline in knowledge among educational groups. In 37 of the 48 possible comparisons, knowledge levels were lower than in the earlier survey; in 21 of these 37, the decline was 10 points or greater. Only one increase of greater than 10 points was observed.[8]

This pattern of stability and decline in political knowledge among educational groups is suggestive concerning the culpability of the educational system.[9] Formal education can increase political knowledge in three different ways. First, the educational system teaches specific pieces of information about politics. "Civics" education—knowledge of the institutions and procedures of government—is taught throughout primary and secondary education, and most college students are exposed to some of this kind of information as well. Second, educational institutions provide skills and contextual information that should make learning about politics easier and more efficient for citizens outside of school. A citizen who emerges from the schools with good

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[8] Gallup's study of geographic literacy, which compared surveys conducted in 1988 with those of 1947–48, found a similar pattern of decreased knowledge among population groups with comparable levels of education. They concluded that "controlling for education, it is apparent that knowledge of geography has actually declined" since the 1940s (National Geographic Society 1988).

[9] It is important to note that years of formal education is an imperfect measure of the educational process per se, especially when comparing two disparate eras like the 1940s and the 1980s. In particular, years of formal schooling is confounded with other status factors such as income. Therefore, changes over time in the relationship between educational attainment and knowledge might reflect other systemic factors that are also correlated with educational attainment.

Table 2. Change in Knowledge over Time, by Level of Education

	1947	*N* of Cases	1989	*N* of Cases	Difference
Able to name member of House:					
No high school diploma	34	(1,552)	22	(75)	−12
High school diploma	45	(799)	25	(193)	−20
Some college	51	(314)	37	(167)	−14
College graduate	66	(312)	41	(171)	−25
	1952		1989		
Can name U.S. vice president:					
No high school diploma	57	(738)	49	(75)	−8
High school diploma	80	(336)	75	(193)	−5
Some college	89	(132)	86	(167)	−3
College graduate	94	(102)	97	(171)	3
Knows presidential term is 4 years:					
No high school diploma	89	(738)	89	(75)	0
High school diploma	96	(336)	97	(193)	1
Some college	100	(132)	99	(167)	−1
College graduate	96	(102)	99	(171)	3
	1947		1989		
Knows which party controls the House:					
No high school diploma	59	(1,494)	52	(75)	−7
High school diploma	77	(749)	71	(193)	−6
Some college	87	(309)	67	(167)	−20
College graduate	90	(306)	90	(171)	0
Knows which party controls the Senate:					
No high school diploma	53	(1,483)	36	(75)	−17
High school diploma	69	(749)	54	(193)	−15
Some college	79	(310)	65	(167)	−14
College graduate	85	(306)	78	(171)	−7

Table 2 (*Continued*)

	1957		1989		
Knowledge of the Fifth Amendment					
No high school diploma	28	(895)	30	(75)	2
High school diploma	52	(485)	51	(193)	−1
Some college	66	(128)	65	(167)	−1
College graduate	80	(121)	67	(171)	−13
	1947		1989		
Knowledge of "business recession"					
No high school diploma	44	(1,576)	37	(75)	−7
High school diploma	68	(775)	58	(193)	−10
Some college	79	(325)	62	(167)	−17
College graduate	91	(342)	81	(171)	−10
Able to define presidential veto					
No high school diploma	75	(1,653)	79	(75)	4
High school diploma	94	(741)	93	(193)	−1
Some college	96	(306)	92	(167)	−4
College graduate	99	(314)	93	(171)	−6
Knows Congress can override veto					
No high school diploma	62	(1,653)	74	(75)	12
High school diploma	87	(741)	86	(193)	−1
Some college	93	(306)	83	(167)	−10
College graduate	98	(314)	87	(171)	−11
Knows two-thirds vote needed for override					
No high school diploma	36	(1,653)	18	(75)	−18

High school diploma	57	(741)	31	(193)	−26
Some college	71	(306)	43	(167)	−28
College graduate	83	(314)	58	(171)	−25
	1954		1989		
First 10 amendments are "Bill of Rights":					
No high school diploma	17	(803)	18	(75)	1
High school diploma	45	(415)	44	(193)	−1
Some college	59	(113)	58	(167)	−1
College graduate	75	(122)	79	(171)	4
Ability to name U.S. senators:					
No high school diploma:		(804)		(75)	
Named neither	60		59		−1
Named one	40		41		1
Named both	23		15		−8
High school diploma:		(415)		(193)	
Named neither	42		49		7
Named one	58		51		−7
Named both	36		21		−15
Some college:		(113)		(167)	
Named neither	38		34		−4
Named one	62		66		4
Named both	38		27		−11
College graduate:		(122)		(171)	
Named neither	22		25		3
Named one	78		75		−3
Named both	61		47		−14

reading skills, a basic knowledge of simple concepts of economics, and basic facts of U.S. history is reasonably well prepared to observe and understand much of what goes on in the political world. And, third, schools can demonstrate the relevance of the political world and contribute to the development of citizen interest in politics, or at the least, in the development of a sense of "civic duty."

The items in table 2 vary in the degree to which they measure specific facts that are taught in school versus facts that change frequently and so require surveillance on the part of citizens. "Taught facts" we asked about include knowledge of the president's veto power, the Fifth Amendment, or the fact that the first ten amendments are called the Bill of Rights. "Surveillance facts" include knowledge of who is the vice president, who represents the state in the U.S. Senate, or which political party has a majority in the House and Senate.

The levels of knowledge about most of the "taught" items remained relatively stable within education groups across the time (table 2). Only for the most difficult of the veto questions (the size of the majority needed for override) was there a substantial decline in the percentage of each educational group able to answer correctly.

Most of the "surveillance" items, however, show declines in the percentage of all educational groups answering correctly. The percentage able to name both senators declined by 8–15 points (depending upon which education group) from 1954 to 1989. Similarly, the percentage who correctly stated which party controlled the House and Senate declined by 6–20 points from 1947 to 1989 (except for college graduates, regarding control of the House). Ability to name one's House member declined by 12–25 points from 1947 to 1989.

Further circumstantial evidence that schools are better at teaching political facts than instilling a sense of civic duty can be found in the performance of the youngest respondents in the surveys, since they are recent products of the educational system. Gallup respondents aged 18–24 years were compared with those in 1989; where possible, educational achievement within this group was standardized to the level of the 1989 sample (the results are not substantially different using unstandardized data). While the results of this comparison are mixed, and there is some evidence of decline in knowledge in "taught facts" over the past 40 years, again the greatest and most consistent decline is found in facts that change over time and so require active surveillance on the part of citizens (data not presented here). The fact that the most consistent decline in political knowledge occurs in the surveillance items rather than in the "taught facts" does not absolve the educational system of its responsibility (and is consistent with Janowitz's argument that the public schools have become less effective in instilling a sense of civic duty since 1945), but it does suggest that systemic factors may share the blame.

A different measure of the efficacy of the schools in civic education—the size of the "gap" in knowledge between citizens with different levels of education—supports this contention. Of course, individuals with different levels of educational attainment also differ in ways that may confound a comparison based on political knowledge. But as a rough indicator of the benefits of education, the differences among groups within a given survey and a comparison of the magnitude of these differences across time ought to provide a useful measure of the effectiveness of schooling (see, e.g., Smith 1989, pp. 215–19). By this standard, education appears to have about the same impact now as in the 1940s and 1950s. The percentage differences between education groups in ability to answer correctly are about the same in 1989 as in the earlier surveys (table 2).

A more precise way of gauging the difference between education groups is through a multivariate analysis in which the importance of education as a predictor of knowlege is weighted along with other factors; the relative importance of education for a given survey item can then be compared across time. Using multivariate logistic regression, we constructed models with age, education (using four categories), and gender as independent variables for comparing our data with those of the 1947 and 1954 Gallup surveys. Since logistic regression coefficients alone are difficult to interpret, we used the coefficients to calculate the probability that male and female respondents of approximately the mean age of the samples (40 years old) at each level of education would correctly answer the knowledge question. The difference in probabilities between education groups in 1947 or 1954 was compared with the corresponding change in 1989. For example, males with no high school diploma in 1947 had a .43 probability of knowing that a two-thirds vote of Congress was needed to override a presidential veto. Males who had completed high school had a probability of .69 (a difference of .26). The comparable difference between those with high school diplomas and those without in 1989 was .20. Thus, for this particular piece of political knowledge, we might conclude that the "value" of finishing high school in 1989 was slightly lower in 1989 than in 1947. Table 3 shows the probabilities of correct answers to several items along with the difference between education groups for 1989 and the earlier years.

The relative importance of education appears very similar in 1989 and 1954 for the question on the Bill of Rights; the changes in probability from one education group to the next were remarkably similar in the two surveys. For the veto item (knowledge that a two-thirds majority is

Table 3. Logistic Regression Analysis of the Effects of Education over Time

	Probability of Correct Answer 1947	Change in Probability from One Education Group to the Next		Probability of Correct Answer 1989
		1947	1989	
Knowledge that two-thirds vote is needed to override presidential veto:				
Males:				
No high school diploma	.43	. . .	. . .	.26
High school diploma	.69	.26	.20	.46
Some college	.83	.14	.14	.60
College graduate	.88	.05	.12	.72
Females:				
No high school diploma	.22	. . .	. . .	.08
High school diploma	.45	.23	.09	.17
Some college	.65	.20	.10	.27
College graduate	.74	.09	.11	.38

	β	Standard Error	Significance
1947:			
Age	.0079	.0027	$p < .01$
Gender	−.9790	.0818	$p < .01$
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	$p < .01$
Education (no high school diploma)	−1.2746	.0828	$p < .01$
Education (high school diploma)	−.2155	.0977	.03
Education (some college)	.4448	.1364	$p < .01$
Constant	.7139	.1438	$p < .01$
Goodness-of-fit $\chi^2 = 2944.181$			
Correctly predicted = 66 percent			
(Significance level = $p < .01$)			
1989:			
Age	.0148	.0056	.01
Gender	−1.4469	.1944	$p < .01$
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	$p < .01$
Education (no high school diploma)	−1.0858	.1873	$p < .01$
Education (high school diploma)	−.1860	.1437	.20
Education (some college)	.3904	.1785	.03
Constant	.8954	.3519	.01
Goodness-of-fit $\chi^2 = 619.044$			
Correctly predicted = 71 percent			
(Significance level = .29)			

Table 3 (*Continued*)

	Probability of Correct Answer 1954	Change in Probability from One Education Group to the Next		Probability of Correct Answer 1989
		1954	1989	
Knowledge that the first ten amendments are called the "Bill of Rights":				
Males:				
No high school diploma	.21	. . .	. . .	.23
High school diploma	.50	.29	.29	.52
Some college	.65	.15	.13	.65
College graduate	.81	.16	.18	.83
Females:				
No high school diploma	.14	. . .	. . .	.15
High school diploma	.38	.24	.25	.38
Some college	.53	.15	.14	.52
College graduate	.72	.19	.22	.74

	β	Standard Error	Significance
1947:			
Age	−.0213	.0050	$p < .01$
Gender	−.4856	.1349	$p < .01$
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	$p < .01$
Education (no high school diploma)	−1.4967	.1123	$p < .01$
Education (high school diploma)	−.1813	.1198	.13
Education (some college)	.4365	.1631	.01
Constant	1.0383	.2403	$p < .01$
Goodness-of-fit χ^2 1348.670			
Correctly predicted = 75 percent			
(Significance level = .42)			
1989:			
Age	−.0039	.0052	.46
Gender	−.5354	.1821	$p < .01$
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	$p < .01$
Education (no high school diploma)	−1.4890	.1814	$p < .01$
Education (high school diploma)	−.1793	.1365	.19
Education (some college)	.3502	.1720	.04
Constant	.9457	.3529	.01
Goodness-of-fit χ^2 = 603.495			
Correctly predicted = 68 percent			
(Significance level = .45)			

Table 3 (*Continued*)

	Probability of Correct Answer 1954	Change in Probability from One Education Group to the Next		Probability of Correct Answer 1989
		1954	1989	
Ability to name both U.S. senators:				
Males:				
No high school diploma	.24	. . .	. . .	.14
High school diploma	.47	.23	.10	.24
Some college	.51	.04	.09	.33
College graduate	.68	.17	.19	.52
Females:				
No high school diploma	.12	. . .	. . .	.07
High school diploma	.28	.16	.06	.13
Some college	.30	.02	.06	.19
College graduate	.47	.17	.15	.34

	β	Standard Error	Significance
1954:			
Age	.0201	.0047	$p < .01$
Gender	−.8576	.1305	$p < .01$
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	$p < .01$
Education (no high school diploma)	−1.0320	.1106	$p < .01$
Education (high school diploma)	.0160	.1198	.89
Education (some college)	.1493	.1634	.36
Constant	−.9263	.2238	$p < .01$
Goodness-of-fit χ^2 = 1336.525			
Correctly predicted = 75 percent			
(Significance level = .52)			
1989:			
Age	.0304	.0060	p < .01
Gender	−.7502	.2048	p < .01
Education (combined)	. . .	. . .	p < .01
Education (no high school diploma)	−.8891	.1997	p < .01
Education (high school diploma)	−.2740	.1561	.08
Education (some college)	.1898	.1916	.32
Constant	−1.3494	.3866	p < .01
Goodness-of-fit χ^2 = 574.923			
Correctly predicted = 76 percent			
(Significance level = .76)			

SOURCES.—For 1989: telephone survey of 610 adult residents of the United States conducted by the authors. For veto questions (1947): Gallup study #USAIPO 47-0396. For Bill of Rights and senators (1954): Gallup study #USAIPO 54-0526. Both Gallup data sets obtained from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research.

needed for override), education's estimated impact was similar among men but appears to have declined among women. The relationship between having completed high school and one's ability to name both senators was weaker in 1989 than in 1954; for the other education categories, this relationship was similar in both periods.

As with education, the multivariate analysis suggests that the relationship between gender and knowledge has remained relatively constant over the past 35 or 40 years. At each level of education, men were more likely to be able to answer the questions than women; comparing the 1947 and 1954 surveys with 1989, the differences between men and women are of similar magnitude.

This finding is something of a surprise, given a number of important changes in society during the intervening years. The level of educational attainment of women in 1989 was about equal to that of men; voter turnout among women was comparable to that of men; labor force participation (and, presumably, its attendant politicizing consequences) among women increased dramatically during the past 20 years; and the number of women who have successfully sought public elective office has risen sharply. All of these changes would suggest that on basic questions of government and politics, the knowledge gap between men and women today would be smaller than in the immediate postwar years.[10] Our analysis suggests that no such narrowing of the differences has occurred (an examination of other empirical studies suggests that there is no consensus on this issue—see Bennett 1988, 1989; Glenn 1972; Rapoport 1985; Sigelman and Yanarella 1986).

Conclusion

While factual knowledge is not the only standard by which to measure a citizenry, one can make the case that knowledge about the people, institutions, processes, and substance of national politics is a necessary, if not sufficient, prerequisite for an effective democracy. While we do not claim to have identified the specific bits of information the public must know, we think the information "tested" in this paper is both important in its own right and is a reasonable sample of the larger pool of knowledge one might expect from an educated citizenry.

The percentage of correct answers on our "civic quiz" (all items, not just those replicating the Erskine data) ranged from 10 percent (for knowing when the Constitutional amendment for women's suffrage was adopted) to 96 percent (for knowing how long a presidential term is), with a median of 50 percent correct. In addition, men, older adults, and more educated individuals were, on average, more knowledgeable than women, younger adults, and less educated individuals. There are several standards against which one might evaluate these findings. While determining an absolute standard is impossible, several of the findings are at the least, unsettling. It is certainly hard to imagine that a citizen can have a meaningful grasp of or play a vital role in the politics of the day without knowing which party controls Congress, what a recession is, what the Bill of Rights is or says, and so forth. And while not knowing the names of political figures or what percentage of Congress is necessary to overturn a presidential veto might seem trivial to some, we suggest it is symptomatic of a larger lack of the contextual knowledge that is critical for understanding and using the daily barrage of discrete bits of information we all face in today's media environment.[11]

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[10] However, to the extent that women have taken on new economic responsibilities in the market while retaining their traditional responsibilities for child rearing and homemaking, one can certainly argue that women have less time for information gathering about politics than in years past.

A fairer standard may be to compare current levels of knowledge to those in the 1940s and 1950s. The results of our survey indicate relative stability in the public's knowledge of some fundamental facts about the political system, with gender and education appearing to have about the same relative effect today as 40 years ago. That knowledge has been stable during a period of rapid changes in education, communication, and the public role of women seems paradoxical. We have provided some partial evidence concerning the responsibility of the educational system in this decline. Schools appear to be about as good at teaching basic facts about the institutions and processes of government today as in the past. However, individuals emerge from the educational system with a lower level of knowledge about current political figures and alignments than 30 or 40 years ago. And individuals of all ages are less able to answer questions about current politics than their counterparts with similar educational backgrounds in the past.

We suspect that Bennett (1988, 1989) and Neuman (1986) are correct in pointing to declining political interest as the proximate culprit for this decline in political surveillance, though our data do not allow us to test this. And while it is the responsibility of schools to instill an interest in politics, there are many other reasons why politics does not now interest citizens—of all ages—to the extent that it did in the past. It is not clear, however, what larger societal forces are at work in leading to this declining interest and how it specifically interacts with learning about politics. What is clear is that the subject of what the public knows, and why it does or does not know it, deserves more attention from the public opinion research community than it has received during the past 40 years.

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[11] As mentioned earlier, most respondents described the survey as a fair test of their knowledge about politics.

Appendix A
Response Rate Data and Calculation

DISPOSITION OF TELEPHONE CALLS

Completions	610
Single refusals	300
Double refusals	393
Terminations	28
Selected respondent not reached during study period	214
Answering machines (presumed households)	61
No answer (multiple attempts)	242
Busy (multiple attempts)	15
Nonworking number of business/government	723
No eligible respondent in household	19

The simple response rate was calculated using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Completions}}{\text{(Completions + refusals + selected respondent not available + answering machines + terminations)}}.$$

The CASRO rate includes in the denominator a term that adjusts the response rate by apportioning calls of unknown status ("no answer" and "busy") based on the proportion of known residences in the numbers for which a determination was made.

Appendix B

Comparison of 1989 Sample with Other Surveys (Percentages)

	Unweighted 1989	Weighted 1989	NES 1988	GSS 1989
Education:				
Less than high school diploma	12.4	25.4	22.0	23.4
High school diploma	31.8	39.1	35.7	32.0
Some college	27.6	18.0	22.5	25.2
College graduate	28.3	17.4	19.8	19.5

Appendix B (*Continued*)

	Unweighted 1989	Weighted 1989	NES 1988	GSS 1989
Race:				
White	85.9	82.4	83.5	85.8
Black	7.4	10.8	13.2	10.2
Hispanic	3.4	3.9	. . .	4.0
Asian	1.1	1.3	.8	
Other/no answer	2.1	1.7	2.5	
Gender:				
Male	45.7	47.3	42.7	42.9
Female	54.3	52.7	57.3	57.1
Annual family income:				
Less than $10,000	8.1	10.0	19.1	15.9
$10,000–$19,999	18.4	22.4	22.4	22.9
$20,000–$34,999	32.0	31.4	26.5	25.6
$35,000–$49,999	21.9	20.8	16.4	16.0
More than $50,000	19.6	15.4	15.6	19.5
Age:				
18–24 years	10.6	10.2	9.6	10.8
25–34 years	24.9	23.6	24.1	23.1
35–44 years	22.9	22.3	23.7	20.4
45–54 years	15.2	14.7	12.2	15.2
55–64 years	10.7	11.2	12.4	11.0
65 years and older	15.7	18.0	18.0	19.5
Party identification:				
Strong Republican	13.3	10.8	13.9	15.3
Republican	20.5	19.3	14.1	21.9
Leaning Republican	10.3	9.4	13.5	8.7
Independent	13.3	14.6	10.8	12.5
Leaning Democrat	9.7	9.6	12.0	7.8
Democrat	20.0	20.6	18.0	21.5
Strong Democrat	13.0	15.7	17.8	11.4

Comparison of Samples with Regard to Political Activity (Percentages)

	Unweighted 1989	Weighted 1989	NES 1988	GSS 1982
How often follow politics:				
Most of the time	49.3	43.8	22.4	35.5
Some of the time	34.1	35.2	36.9	34.9
Now and then	11.0	13.3	25.5	18.7
Hardly at all	5.6	7.6	15.2	10.0

Appendix B (*Continued*)

	Unweighted 1989	Weighted 1989	NES 1988	GSS 1989
How often discuss politics with family and friends:				
Every day	11.8	9.5	20.7	. . .
Three to four times per week	22.5	19.6	15.6	. . .
One to two times per week	30.7	28.9	27.7	. . .
Less often than once per week, or never	35.1	42.0	36.0	. . .
How many days last week watched national network TV news:				
0	12.5	13.6	12.4	. . .
1	4.4	4.2	3.7	. . .
2	12.0	11.3	7.3	. . .
3	8.2	7.6	6.8	. . .
4	8.4	8.6	6.0	. . .
5	14.8	14.4	6.1	. . .
6	3.1	3.3	2.0	. . .
7	36.7	37.0	55.6	. . .
How many days last week read a daily newspaper:				
0	16.7	19.5	23.4	. . .
1	5.9	6.9	9.1	. . .
2	8.9	9.2	7.6	. . .
3	7.5	7.3	6.7	. . .
4	4.6	4.6	4.4	. . .
5	6.9	6.7	4.0	. . .
6	2.8	2.6	2.1	. . .
7	46.7	43.2	42.8	. . .
Did respondent claim to have voted in November 1988 elections?				
Yes	76.1	72.0	69.7	64.5
No	23.1	28.0	30.3	32.0

Knowledge Items

	Weighted 1989	NES 1988	GSS 1987
Named political leaders:			
U.S. representative	29	. . .	36
Governor	74	. . .	78
Said Democrats have majority in:			
House of Representatives	68	59	. . .
U.S. Senate	55	54	. . .

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THE POLLS—POLL TRENDS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS AND PROTECTION

RILEY E. DUNLAP
RIK SCARCE

The last *Public Opinion Quarterly* report on the environment noted that "the issue of environmental protection has had its ups and downs [but] has been a persistent concern" (Gillroy and Shapiro 1986, p. 270). Five years later it is clear that public support for environmental protection not only has persisted but also has risen substantially in recent years. This report documents that upward trend by reviewing a wide range of national trend data. But first, the history of public opinion on environmental issues is briefly reviewed in order to put the recent trends into context.

Long-term Trends

A detailed review of all known longitudinal data reveals the following evolution of public concern with the environment over the past quarter century: such concern developed rapidly in the late sixties, leading Erskine (1972b, p. 120) to label the "unprecedented speed and urgency with which ecological issues have burst into American consciousness" as a "miracle of public opinion." However, public concern with environmental problems "peaked" around the first Earth Day in 1970, and then declined throughout the rest of the decade—fairly rapidly at first, then slowly but steadily from about 1973 to 1980 (Dunlap 1991a, 1991b). This decline led some to predict the disappearance of environmental problems from the public agenda (e.g., Downs 1972), while the

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fairly modest level of erosion over the rest of the decade led others to emphasize that environmental quality had become "an enduring concern" (e.g., Mitchell 1980). Although environmental concern declined throughout the seventies, there was surprisingly little "backlash" against environmental protection given the nation's economic and energy problems (Mitchell 1980), and by the end of the decade the public remained more concerned about environmental quality than in the mid-sixties (Dunlap 1989, pp. 110–13).

The situation changed considerably in the eighties. An apparent backlash against the Reagan administration's environmental policies and the continuing emergence of new environmental problems led to substantial increases in public support for environmental protection (Dunlap 1991a, Gillroy and Shapiro 1986). The trend continued after the James Watt and EPA controversies diminished and has accelerated since the Bush administration took office. The "discovery" of critical problems such as global warming and ozone depletion, and an endless range of specific incidents such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, pollution of ocean beaches, and contamination of water supplies, have likely fueled the recent increases. The mass media—stimulated by environmental activists, scientists, and policymakers—have focused a great deal of attention on these problems (Dunlap 1991b, Mitchell 1990).

Environmental awareness was also likely given a "boost" by the celebration of the twentieth Earth Day, and by spring of 1990 public concern over the environment had reached unprecedented proportions (see fig. 1). While there are no trend items currently in use that extend farther back than 1973, recently released data from two time points—1990 and 1970, 1971, or 1972—indicate that public awareness of environmental problems and support for environmental protection is higher now than in the early seventies (see tables 33, 34, 42, and 43 below). Since most social problems fade from the public agenda rather quickly (Downs 1972), the persistence and recent renewal of environmental concern might be termed a "second miracle" of public opinion.

Trends by Topic Areas

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Public support for environmental protection is sometimes questioned because environmental problems are seen as not being very important to the public (see Mitchell 1990, p. 84). The primary evidence is that such problems have low "salience," indicated by the near disappearance of "environment" from volunteered "most important problem" (MIP) responses after the early seventies (Dunlap 1989, pp. 101–4).

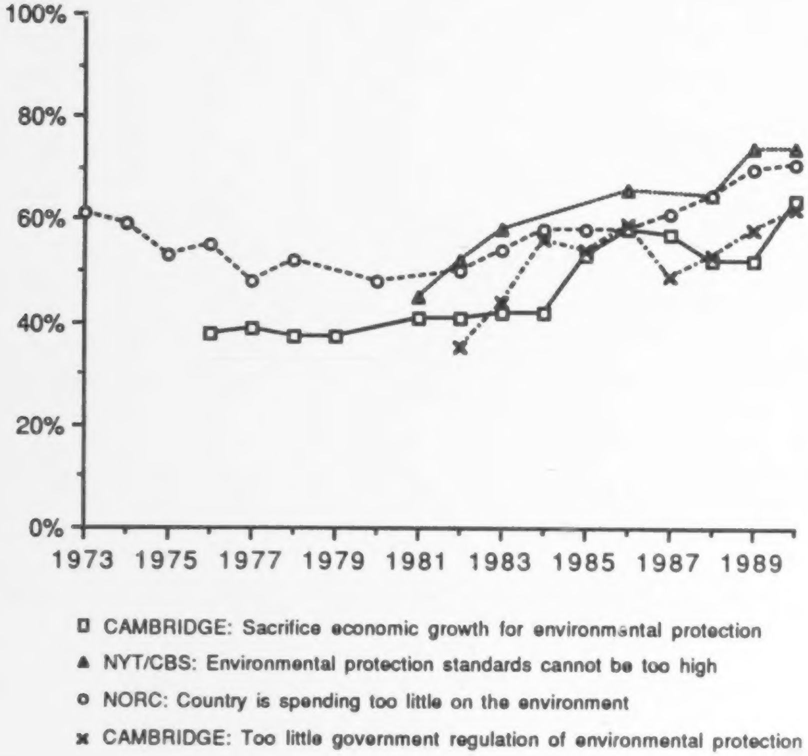

Figure 1. Support for environmental protection

This situation has changed, at least temporarily, the past couple of years. Results in tables 1 and 2 and from a number of cross-sectional studies (e.g., Opinion Dynamics Corporation 1990, p. 14) reveal that environmental problems have once again become relatively salient, receiving significant MIP mentions (but lagging behind top-rated issues such as drugs).

Most important problem responses are a stringent measure of salience, and it has been argued that public concern for the environment should be measured relative to concern over other problems (Dunlap 1989, pp. 124–30). Results from two different approaches to measuring "relative importance," shown in tables 3 and 4, reveal that environmental problems fare better than in MIP responses (not unexpected given Schuman and Scott's [1987] comparison of question formats), but still fail to reach the very top of the list. Thus, environmental problems have become more salient in recent years but are still seldom seen as *the* most important problem facing our nation.[1]

[1] For example, a 1990 survey found 19 percent responding that "the environment is the issue facing our country that I personally care the most about," 63 percent that it is "one of the three or four issues that I care the most about," and only 17 percent that

Although environmental problems have increased in salience and relative importance, judging the "strength" of public concern over such problems remains difficult (Dunlap 1989, pp. 121–33). One approach to judging strength is electoral impact, but data clearly documenting the impact of environmental issues on voting are rare (see table 44*d*). In general, there is a dearth of information on the strength or intensity of environmental concern, and a definite need for measuring it (see, e.g., Schuman and Presser 1981, chap. 6).

PERCEIVED SERIOUSNESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

When pollsters ask respondents about the seriousness of environmental problems per se, majorities typically see environmental problems as serious—and the upward trend over the past decade is unmistakable. Majorities see environmental quality as deteriorating and as likely to continue to deteriorate (tables 5 and 6). This holds for water pollution (tables 7 and 8) and air pollution (table 9), and for both global problems such as the "greenhouse effect" (tables 6 and 10) and local problems such as solid waste (table 11), and for less noxious problems such as use of plastics (tables 12 and 13). A frequent contributor to this trend is a marked decline in the percentage of "Don't Know" responses (tables 5, 7, 8, and 10).

DEGREE OF THREAT POSED BY ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Not only are environmental problems seen as more serious nowadays, but they are increasingly viewed as representing a "threat" to human well-being (table 14). Particularly notable is a set of Cambridge items (table 15) that shows that a wide range of environmental problems is viewed by majorities as at least somewhat threatening, both to their personal health and safety and to the overall quality of the environment, and that the threat increased markedly (typically 10–15 percent) from just 1987 to 1989. The results also reveal considerable correspondence between the perceived threat to oneself and to the environment posed by the various problems.

SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

Given the foregoing it comes as no surprise that support for government action on behalf of environmental quality has risen substantially, particularly in the last few years. Thus, a large majority believes that government is "spending too little" on the environment (table 16), and

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"there are many issues that I care more about than the environment" (Environment Opinion Study 1990; also see Hart-Teeter 1990; Roper Organization 1990).

majorities say that government regulations have "not gone far enough" (table 17) and that there is "too little" government regulation in the area of environmental protection (table 18). These strong multiyear trends are bolstered by two-point-in-time data as well (tables 19 and 20). Especially striking is the proportion of "pro-" to "anti-environmental" opinion found with these items in 1990.

Public support for government action on specific types of environmental problems is also strong. Majorities believe that too little is being done to solve solid waste problems (table 21) and large majorities want "urgent" or "prompt" government action on a wide range of problems (table 22). Even when attention is focused on specific restrictions on individual behavior, there is generally strong support (table 23).

The strong endorsement of government action to protect environmental quality is understandable given that the public sees government as having primary responsibility for environmental protection and is somewhat skeptical of the efficacy of efforts by individuals in the absence of government regulations (see, e.g., Roper Organization 1990). Such strong support of government action makes the public's negative reaction to the Reagan administration's environmental agenda understandable (Dunlap 1991a; Mitchell 1990).

BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Contributing to the high level of support for environmental regulations is the growing belief among the public that business and industry will not voluntarily protect the environment (table 24). Furthermore, the private sector is increasingly viewed as doing a poor job of protecting the environment (tables 25 and 26), and this is especially true of oil companies (table 27). These findings, coupled with the consistent finding that the public views business and industry as the major contributors to environmental problems,[2] make the strong support for government action to protect the environment even more comprehensible.

ENVIRONMENT VERSUS ECONOMY

The public's support of environmental regulations on business and industry is also compatible with their increasing preference for environmental quality over economic growth. This trend has grown so markedly over the past decade that environmental protection is now endorsed by large majorities and economic growth by only small minorities (table 28). A similar trend is apparent in support of environmental protection "regardless of the cost" (table 29). Only when environmental protection is linked to increased unemployment does its strong majority backing disappear, and here the proportion willing to accept higher unemployment has recently grown considerably (table 30).

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[2] Although we have been unable to locate trend data that document this contention, early trend data and recent cross-sectional data clearly support it. The former data led Erskine (1972a, p. 263) to write that "American industry is the prime culprit on the ecological scene, as the public see it," while examples of more recent support can be found in Roper Organization (1990).

Although strong and increasing public endorsement of environmental protection over economic growth and well-being consistently emerges from these data, some analysts (e.g., Ladd 1982) have argued that forcing respondents to choose between the two goals prohibits them from stating a preference for both. The relatively large proportions refusing to choose one over the other in table 28 give credence to this argument, as do the results in table 31, which show a majority responding that we "can have growth and a clean world." Thus, if forced to choose, a majority of the public opts for environmental protection over economic growth, but it appears that a slightly increasing majority thinks we can have both (also see Environment Opinion Study 1990; Opinion Dynamics Corporation 1990).

WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

One might argue that it is easy to express support for environmental protection over economic growth in the abstract, where the personal implications are not apparent. However, a variety of evidence shows an increase in the public's expressed willingness to pay higher prices for goods and services (including grocery items), to the point that willingness to absorb the cost of environmental protection has clearly become the majority position (tables 32–36). This increased willingness to pay higher prices for environmental quality is dramatically illustrated in table 37.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM AND PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIORS

The public's pro-environment orientation is also reflected in its strong support for the environmental movement and surprisingly high levels of behavior on behalf of environmental protection. Tables 38 and 39 show that a majority of the public identifies themselves as "environmentalists," while significant and generally increasing minorities claim involvement with an environmental organization for themselves or other family members (tables 40, 44, and 45). The still relatively small proportion reporting having taken political actions such as writing letters to officials has also increased (table 44; also see Roper Organization 1990), as has stated willingness to work for environmental protection (table 42).

In recent years another form of environmental activism, developing "ecologically responsible" life-styles, has also gained visibility. Growing majorities report having made some changes in personal behaviors (tables 41, 44, and 46), with various forms of recycling and avoidance of specific products such as aerosols or phosphate soaps among the most popular. Of potentially greater significance is the fact that sizable minorities report having at least occasionally avoided buying products from companies with poor environmental records (tables 45 and 46*g*). These results suggest that "green consumerism" may become a potent force (Fitzpatrick and Byers 1990).

Besides noting that the above results rest on self-reported as opposed to observed behaviors, and are thus likely to exaggerate actual behavioral changes, it should also be emphasized that the most popular behaviors tend to be those that require minimal effort and personal cost. Thus, only a fifth of the public "strongly agree" that they would be willing to give up convenience products to help preserve natural resources (table 43). In short, while most Americans report having at least occasionally recycled or taken environmental considerations into account when shopping, few have made the substantial changes in life-style that many environmentalists see as necessary (Roper Organization 1990).

Conclusion

In sum, the trends reported above indicate that public concern for environmental quality has reached an all-time high. While questions about the strength of environmental concern remain unclear, growing majorities see environmental problems as serious, worsening, and increasingly threatening to human well-being; strong and growing majorities support government action to protect environmental quality; and majorities generally side with environmental protection over economic growth as well as indicate a personal willingess to pay the costs of such protection.

Perhaps the most important trends are the public's increasingly positive orientation toward environmentalism and the growth in both political and consumer actions on behalf of environmental protection. Although it is always risky to draw policy implications directly from poll results, we conclude from the consistently pro-environmental responses reviewed here that Americans are very supportive of environmental protection. How well this support is mobilized and translated into significant behaviors will play a critical role in determining future environmental conditions as well as policy.

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Cambridge: Cambridge Reports, Inc., and Cambridge Reports/Research International
Gallup: Gallup Organization
Gallup/*Newsweek:* Gallup Organization/*Newsweek*
Harris: Louis Harris and Associates
MG/AP: Media General/Associated Press
NBC/*WSJ:* National Broadcasting Company/*Wall Street Journal*
NORC/GSS: NORC's General Social Survey
NYT/CBS: *New York Times*/Columbia Broadcasting System
Roper: Roper Organization
YCS: Yankelovich, Clancy, and Schulman

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I. Relative Importance of Environmental Issues

1. *Cambridge:* What do you think are the two most important problems facing the United States today? (Percent volunteering "environment" as first or second most important problem.)

Q3/87	*Q4/87*	*Q1/88*	*Q2/88*	*Q3/88*	*Q4/88*	*Q1/89*	*Q2/89*	*Q3/89*	*Q4/89*
5	2	6	3	8	6	6	15	16	10

1/90	*2/90*	*3/90*	*4/90*	*5/90*	*6/90*	*7/90*
13	16	16	19	21	23	21

2. *Gallup:* What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today? (Percent volunteering "environment" or "pollution.")

	5/89	*7/89*	*9/89*	*11/89*	*4/90*	*7/90*	*10/90*	*11/90*
Environment/pollution	4	6	1	3	8	5	2	2

3. *Roper:* Here is a list of things people have told us they are concerned about today. Would you read over that list and then tell me which 2 or 3 *you personally* are most concerned about today? (Percent)

	1/74	*1/77*	*1/79*	*1/83*	*1/84*	*1/85*	*1/86*	*1/87*	*1/88*	*1/89*	*1/90*
Pollution of air and water	12	13	10	8	12	14	13	15	14	19	21
The fuel and energy shortage	46	31	25	13	8	7	7	6	5	3	5

4. *Roper:* There are many problems facing our nation today. But at certain times some things are more important than others and need more attention. I'd like to know for each of the things on this list whether you think it is something we should be making a *major* effort on now, or something we should be making *some* effort on now, or something not needing any particular effort now. (Percent choosing "make major effort.")

	1987	*1990*
Trying to improve the quality of our environment	56 (8th out of 11)	78 (4th out of 12)

II. Perceived Seriousness of Environmental Problems

5. *Cambridge:* Do you think the overall quality of the environment around here is very much better than it was 5 years ago, somewhat better than it was 5 years ago, slightly better than it was 5 years ago, slightly worse, somewhat worse, or very much worse than it was 5 years ago? (Percent)

	7/83	*7/84*	*7/86*	*7/87*	*7/88*	*7/89*	*7/90*
Very much, somewhat, slightly *better*	37	39	37	41	32	28	31
About the same/don't know (volunteered)	30	28	31	27	21	23	13
Slightly, somewhat, very much *worse*	34	33	32	32	46	49	55

6. *Roper:* Here is a list of some different kinds of problems people might be facing 25 to 50 years from now. Would you please go down that list and for

each one tell me whether you think it will be a serious problem your children or grandchildren will be facing 25 to 50 years from now? (Percent)

	1974	*1980*	*1984*	*1988*
Severe air pollution	68	68	70	82
Severe water pollution	69	69	71	82
Shortage of water supplies	53	57	53	66
The "Greenhouse Effect"	. . .	. . .	37	65
Overpopulation	60	52	56	61

7. *Cambridge:* Do you think the quality and safety of your drinking water is very much better than it was 5 years ago, somewhat better than it was 5 years ago, slightly better than it was 5 years ago, slightly worse, somewhat worse, or very much worse than it was 5 years ago? (Percent)

	7/85	*7/86*	*7/87*	*7/88*	*7/89*	*7/90*
Very much, somewhat, slightly *better*	25	27	30	24	22	25
About the same/don't know (volunteered)	43	42	35	30	33	29
Slightly, somewhat, very much *worse*	31	31	34	45	45	46

8. *Cambridge:* There are a lot of sources of underground water in the United States. Some people say many of these sources are contaminated with chemicals and other pollutants. I'd like to know how you feel about this. Do you think most underground sources of water are contaminated, as many underground sources are contaminated as are uncontaminated, not very many are contaminated, or none are contaminated? (Percent)

	1981	*1983*	*1984*	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*
Most are	7	7	9	11	11	17	22
As many are as are not	21	22	28	29	28	33	32
Not very many are	44	39	32	36	36	31	30
None are	3	3	1	2	2	2	3
Don't know	25	29	29	21	23	17	13

9. *Harris:* Seriousness of air pollution from various sources:

a. Air pollution by trucks and automobiles. (Percent)

	1982	*1990*
Very serious	33	59
Somewhat serious	47	34
Not very serious	15	6
Not serious at all	3	1
Not sure	2	. . .

b. Air pollution from acid rain, caused by sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants. (Percent)

	1986	*1990*
Very serious	42	64
Somewhat serious	37	26
Not very serious	13	5
Not serious at all	4	1
Not sure	4	4

c. Air pollution by coal-burning electric power plants. (Percent)

	1986	*1990*
Very serious	30	49
Somewhat serious	45	35
Not very serious	18	10
Not serious at all	4	2
Not sure	3	4

10. *Cambridge:* The greenhouse effect—which is a gradual warming of the earth's atmosphere—is believed to be caused by carbon dioxide and other gases accumulating in the atmosphere and preventing heat from the earth's surface from escaping into space. Some people have expressed concern that the greenhouse effect could lead to harmful changes in ocean levels and weather patterns. Just from this information, do you feel the greenhouse effect is a very serious problem, a somewhat serious problem, not too serious a problem, or not a serious problem at all? (Percent)

	Q1/82	*Q3/86*	*Q3/88*	*Q3/89*
Very serious	12	24	39	41
Somewhat serious	31	39	32	34
Not too serious	15	14	10	10
Not serious at all	7	6	3	4
Don't know	36	17	15	11

11. *Roper:* Now I'd like to talk with you about the issue of consumer solid waste—that is, household garbage and trash as well as large consumer items such as discarded furniture and appliances. Some communities are beginning to experience problems in that they are running out of places to dispose of their solid wastes. Thinking about your own community, at the present time, would you say the problem of consumer solid waste disposal is very serious, somewhat serious, not that serious, or not at all serious? (Percent)

	10/88	*10/89*	*10/90*
Very serious	24	29	48
Somewhat serious	34	37	30
Not that serious	24	19	12
Not at all serious	13	11	6
Don't know	5	4	4

12. *Cambridge:* Do you think the growing use of plastics presents a serious environmental threat, or not? (Percent)

	Q4/86	*Q3/87*	*Q3/88*	*Q3/89*
Yes	38	40	59	57
No	37	40	19	22
Not sure (volunteered)	25	20	22	21

13. *Cambridge:* Do you think the convenience and other benefits of using plastic products such as wrapping paper, containers, and utensils outweigh the

environmental risks created by the difficulties of disposing of these products, or do the risks outweigh the benefits? (Percent)

	Q3/87	*Q3/88*	*Q3/89*
Benefits outweigh risks	45	27	27
Risks outweigh benefits	31	43	45
Neither (volunteered)	9	13	13
Don't know	15	17	15

III. Degree of Threat Posed by Environmental Problems

14. *Roper:* Here is a list of some different things people have said are threats to our society. For each one would you tell me whether you think it is a very serious threat these days to a citizen like yourself, a moderately serious threat, not much of a threat, or no threat at all? First, environmental pollution. . . . (Percent)

	1984	*1989*
Very serious threat	44	62
Moderately serious	40	30
Not much	13	5
No threat	2	0
Don't know/no answer	1	3

15. *Cambridge:* Here is a card with a scale from "1" to "7," where "1" means "no threat at all" and "7" means "a large threat." Now I am going to read you a list of potential threats to the overall quality of the environment. Please use the card to tell me how much you think each problem threatens the overall quality of the environment. The more you think the problem *threatens overall environmental quality*, the higher the number you would give it. (Emphasis added.)

Now I am going to read several potential problems facing our society. As I read each one, please use the same card to tell me how much you think each problem threatens your personal health and safety. The more you think a problem *threatens your personal health and safety*, the higher the number you would give it. (Emphasis added.) (Percent)

	Environmental Threat		*Personal Threat*	
	Q3/87	*Q3/89*	*Q3/87*	*Q3/89*
a. Air pollution.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	72	85	. . .	. . .
Possible threat (4)	16	6	. . .	. . .
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	11	7	. . .	. . .
Don't know	2	2	. . .	. . .
b. Air pollution caused by business and industry.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	. . .	. . .	60	78
Possible threat (4)	. . .	. . .	19	9
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	. . .	. . .	19	11
Don't know	. . .	. . .	2	2

	Environmental Threat		*Personal Threat*	
	Q3/87	*Q3/89*	*Q3/87*	*Q3/89*
c. Air pollution caused by cars and trucks.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	. . .	. . .	56	73
Possible threat (4)	. . .	. . .	20	13
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	. . .	. . .	22	13
Don't know	. . .	. . .	1	2
d. The pollution of our rivers, lakes, and oceans.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	74	83	68	78
Possible threat (4)	14	8	16	9
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	10	5	14	10
Don't know	2	3	2	3
e. Acid rain.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	61	73	54	63
Possible threat (4)	13	12	15	13
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	15	9	20	15
Don't know	11	7	10	8
f. The greenhouse effect.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	45	69	37	66
Possible threat (4)	15	12	15	12
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	17	9	20	11
Don't know	24	10	27	11
g. Disposal of hazardous waste material.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	83	84	78	82
Possible threat (4)	8	6	9	7
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	6	5	10	7
Don't know	3	5	3	5
h. Using additives and pesticides in food production.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	69	75	70	78
Possible threat (4)	17	13	16	11
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	12	9	13	9
Don't know	2	3	3	3
i. Contamination of underground water supplies.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	71	82	65	81
Possible threat (4)	12	8	13	8
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	11	5	16	7
Don't know	5	5	4	4
j. Depletion of the ozone layer in the atmosphere.				
Clear threat (5 through 7)	64	76	59	74
Possible threat (4)	13	8	13	10
Minimal threat (1 through 3)	13	7	16	8
Don't know	12	9	13	9

IV. Support for Government Actions

16. *NORC-GSS:* We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I'm going to name some of these problems, and for each one I'd like you to tell me whether you think we're spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. First . . . Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on . . . improving and protecting the environment?[a] (Percent)

	1973	*1974*	*1975*	*1976*	*1977*	*1978*	*1980*	*1982*
Spending too little	61	59	53	55	48	52	48	50
Spending about right	26	27	31	31	34	33	31	32
Spending too much	7	8	10	9	11	10	15	12
Don't know	6	7	6	5	7	5	6	6

	1983	*1984*	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
Spending too little	54	58	58	58	61	65	70	71
Spending about right	31	31	29	30	27	26	20	21
Spending too much	8	7	8	6	6	5	4	4
Don't know	6	4	5	6	6	5	5	4

[a] Beginning in 1984 the item was shortened from "improving and protecting the environment" to "the environment" for subsamples, but because the results obtained with the two versions are very similar we report the combined responses for 1984 through 1990.

17. *Roper:* There are also different opinions about how far we've gone with environmental protection laws and regulations. At the present time, do you think environmental protection laws and regulations have gone too far, or not far enough, or have struck about the right balance? (Percent)

	10/73	*10/74*	*10/75*	*10/76*	*9/77*	*9/79*	*9/80*	*9/81*	*9/82*	*9/83*	*9/89*	*9/90*
Gone too far	13	17	20	15	20	24	25	21	16	14	11	11
Not far enough	34	25	31	32	27	29	33	31	37	48	55	54
Struck right balance	32	44	37	35	39	36	33	38	38	30	27	26
Don't know	21	15	12	18	14	11	10	10	9	9	7	9

18. *Cambridge:* In general, do you think there is too much, too little, or about the right amount of government regulation and involvement in the area of environmental protection? (Percent)

	1982	*1983*	*1984*	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
Too little	35	44	56	54	59	49	53	58	62
About the right amount	41	34	27	28	26	30	25	24	15
Too much	11	9	8	10	7	12	12	9	16
Don't know	12	14	9	8	9	9	10	9	7

19. *YCS:* Do you think that the environmental laws and regulations that are currently on the books are adequate, should go further than they do, or have gone too far already? (Percent)

	1985	*1990*
Adequate	29	19
Should go further	45	63
Have gone too far	16	12
Not sure	10	6

20. *YCS:* Aside from the laws themselves, do you think the government's enforcement efforts are adequate, have been too strict, or are not strict enough? (Percent)

	1985	*1990*
Adequate	27	21
Too strict	5	5
Not strict enough	63	70
Not sure	5	4

21. *Cambridge:* What about the government—is government doing too much, too little, or about the right amount to solve waste disposal problems? (Percent)

	1983	*1986*	*1988*
Too little	65	64	70
Right amount	21	24	15
Too much	1	2	4
Don't know	13	9	11

22. *MG/AP:* I'm going to list a few environmental issues. Please tell me what you think is appropriate for each one: urgent government action no matter what the cost; prompt government action; limited government action; or no government action. How about:

	1989 (%)	*1990 (%)*
a. Air pollution.		
Urgent	32	33
Prompt	50	47
Limited	15	17
No	2	2
Don't know/no answer	2	1
b. Pollution of drinking water.		
Urgent	52	57
Prompt	37	33
Limited	8	9
No	1	1
Don't know/no answer	3	1
c. Pollution of the oceans.		
Urgent	43	43
Prompt	43	40
Limited	11	14
No	1	2
Don't know/no answer	3	2
d. Acid rain.		
Urgent	43	41
Prompt	37	36
Limited	11	16
No	2	2
Don't know/no answer	7	5

	1989 (%)	*1990 (%)*
e. Toxic waste disposal.		
Urgent	63	65
Prompt	28	27
Limited	4	5
No	1	1
Don't know/no answer	3	2
f. Global warming known as the greenhouse effect.		
Urgent	39	34
Prompt	33	34
Limited	13	20
No	2	4
Don't know/no answer	13	9
g. Deforestation.		
Urgent	43	39
Prompt	35	36
Limited	13	18
No	3	2
Don't know/no answer	6	4

23. *MG/AP:* To reduce air pollution, would you support or oppose:

	1989 (%)	*1990 (%)*
a. A ban on household aerosol products.		
Support	75	77
Oppose	16	16
Don't know/no answer	9	7
b. A ban on charcoal lighter fluid.		
Support	60	64
Oppose	26	25
Don't know/no answer	14	11
c. A ban on non-radial tires, which release more rubber into the air.		
Support	58	64
Oppose	26	21
Don't know/no answer	16	15
d. A ban on gasoline-powered garden appliances.		
Suppport	34	41
Oppose	59	51
Don't know/no answer	7	7
e. Parking restrictions in cities to discourage the use of cars.		
Support	44	47
Oppose	47	44
Don't know/no answer	10	9

	1989 (%)	*1990 (%)*
f. Strict pollution controls on oil- and coal-burning power plants, even if that would raise the price of electricity.		
Support	72	77
Oppose	20	16
Don't know/no answer	8	7

V. Business and the Environment

24. *Gallup:* All things considered, do you think industry will, on its own initiative, further reduce pollution or do you think government will have to force them to do so? (Percent)

	1970	*1990*
Industry on its own initiative	14	9
Industry if government forces them	72	82
Both (volunteered)	8	6
Don't know	6	3

25. *Roper:* Now, here are some criticisms that have been made about American business management. Would you read over that list and then call off any of them that you personally are very much concerned about? (Percent)

	6/76	*6/82*	*6/87*	*5/90*
Neglect of the environment—polluting air and water	47	59	67	76

26. *YCS:* How would you describe the business community's compliance with environmental laws and regulations? In general, has business compliance been good or poor? (Percent)

	1985	*1990*
Good	37	31
Poor	50	56
In the middle (volunteered)	7	5
Not sure	6	8

27. *Cambridge:* Do you think the oil companies developing coastal waters have done an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job of protecting the environment? (Percent)

	Q3/87	*Q3/88*	*Q3/89*
Excellent	4	5	3
Good	37	33	23
Only fair	27	29	32
Poor	9	12	28
Don't know	23	20	14

VI. Environment versus Economy

28. *Cambridge:* Which of these two statements is closer to your opinion? (Percent)

	1976	*1977*	*1978*	*1979*	*1981*	*1982*	*1983*
We must sacrifice economic growth in order to preserve and protect the environment.	38	39	37	37	41	41	42
We must be prepared to sacrifice environmental quality for economic growth.	21	26	23	32	26	31	16
Don't know	41	35	39	32	33	28	42

	1984	*1985*	*1986*	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
We must sacrifice economic growth in order to preserve and protect the environment.	42	53	58	57	52	52	64
We must be prepared to sacrifice environmental quality for economic growth.	27	23	19	23	19	21	15
Don't know	31	24	23	20	29	27	21

29. *NYT/CBS:* Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Protecting the environment is so important that requirements and standards cannot be too high, and continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost. (Percent)

	1981	*1982*	*1983*	*1986*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
Agree	45	52	58	66	65	74	74
Disagree	42	41	34	27	22	18	21
Don't know/no answer	13	7	8	7	13	8	5

30. *Cambridge:* Increased efforts by business and industry to improve environmental quality could lead to higher unemployment in some industries. Would you be willing to accept a higher rate of unemployment so that industry could better preserve and protect the environment, or not? (Percent)

	7/86	*7/87*	*7/89*	*7/90*
Yes	28	27	28	40
No	49	53	50	47
Not sure	23	20	22	13

31. *Cambridge:* Which of these two statements is closer to your opinion? There is no relationship between economic growth and the quality of the environment—indeed, we can have more and more goods and services and also a clean world. We cannot have both economic growth and a high level of environmental quality; we must sacrifice one or the other. (Percent)

	1976	*1978*	*1980*	*1981*	*1982*	*1983*	*1984*	*1985*
Can have growth and a clean world	50	47	50	45	49	49	55	51
Cannot have both	23	30	31	35	35	27	28	33
Don't know	27	23	19	30	16	23	17	16

	1986	*1987*	*1988*	*1989*	*1990*
Can have growth and a clean world	51	56	49	49	59
Cannot have both	31	31	31	33	32
Don't know	18	13	20	18	9

VII. Willingness to Pay for Environmental Protection

32. *Gallup/Newsweek:* Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Government regulations and requirements to protect the environment are worth the extra cost added to the products and services the average person buys. (Percent)

	1981	*1990*
Agree	58	71
Disagree	36	20
Don't know	6	9

33. *Gallup:* As you may know, it will cost a considerable amount of money to control pollution. Would you be willing to pay the slightly higher prices for your goods and services business would have to charge to control pollution? (Percent)

	3/70	*3/90*
Yes	63	79
No	27	17
Don't know	10	4

34. *YCS:* I would be willing to pay as much as 10 percent more a week for grocery items if I could be sure that they would not harm the environment. (Percent)

	1971	*1985*	*1986*	*1989*	*1990*
Strongly agree	7	7	8	10	14
Agree	40	40	39	54	50
Disagree	43	44	43	31	31
Strongly disagree	10	9	10	5	5

35. *NBC/WSJ:* Sometimes the laws that are designed to protect the environment cause industries to spend more money and raise their prices. Which do you think is more important: protecting the environment or keeping prices down? (Percent)

	12/75	*12/78*	*10/81*	*4/90*
Protect the environment	57	56	51	80
Keep prices down	33	39	38	13
Not sure	10	5	11	7

36. *Cambridge:* Increased efforts by business and industry to improve environmental quality could lead to higher consumer prices. Would you be willing to pay higher consumer prices so that industry could better preserve and protect the environment, or not? (Percent)

	7/86	*7/87*	*7/89*	*7/90*
Yes	56	55	52	72
No	26	29	29	23
Not sure	19	16	19	5

37. *Cambridge:* How much more per month would you personally be willing to pay for all the goods and services you use as a consumer, if you knew that

as a result of your paying higher prices business and industry would be able to operate in a way that did not harm the environment? (All responses volunteered.)

	7/84	*7/85*	*7/86*	*7/87*	*7/90*
None (%)	39	32	23	26	16
$1 to $10 (%)	30	36	34	34	12
$11 to $20 (%)	7	7	7	12	5
$21 to $30 (%)	3	4	5	4	5
$31 to $40 (%)	1	1	2	1	1
$41 to $50 (%)	2	2	3	3	6
More than $50 (%)	4	4	5	4	18
Don't know (%)	13	15	20	16	37
Median ($)	8.10	7.70	8.09	9.05	36.99

VIII. Environmental Activism and Pro-environmental Behaviors

38. *Cambridge:* Using a scale from "1" to "7," where "1" means "do not identify at all" and "7" means "strongly identify with," please tell me how much you identify yourself with the label "environmentalist." (Percent)

	7/89	*6/90*	*7/90*
Identify with "environmentalist" (5, 6, or 7)	42	51	58
Neutral (4)	22	19	20
Do not identify with (1, 2, or 3)	34	27	20
Don't know	3	3	2

39. *Gallup:* Do you consider yourself to be an environmentalist or not? (If "yes"): Would you say you are a strong environmentalist or not? (Percent)

	5/89	*4/90*
Strong environmentalist	41	35
Not strong environmentalist	35	38
Not an environmentalist	20	24
No opinion	4	3

40. *Cambridge:* In the past year, have you or has anyone in your household donated to or been active in a group or organization working to protect the environment? (Percent)

	7/87	*7/88*	*7/89*	*6/90*	*7/90*
Yes	15	17	22	36	40
No	81	75	73	62	59
Not sure	4	8	5	2	1

41. *Cambridge:* Over the past several years have you made any changes in your day-to-day behavior because of your concerns about the environment? (Percent)

	7/87	*7/89*	*7/90*
Yes	48	57	75
No	46	38	24
Not sure	6	5	1

42. *YCS:* I would be willing to spend a few hours a week of my own time helping to reduce the pollution problem. (Percent)

	1971	*1985*	*1986*	*1989*	*1990*
Strongly agree	7	8	7	9	10
Agree	59	50	51	58	62
Disagree	30	35	37	30	25
Strongly disagree	4	7	5	3	3

43. *YCS:* I would be willing to give up convenience products and services I now enjoy if it meant helping preserve our natural resources. (Percent)

	1971	*1985*	*1986*	*1989*	*1990*
Strongly agree	14	13	12	16	19
Agree	63	59	60	65	60
Disagree	21	25	26	17	19
Strongly disagree	2	3	2	2	2

44. *Gallup:* Which, if any, of the following things have you done in connection with problems of conservation and pollution? First, have you . . .

	5/72 (%)	*3/90 (%)*
a. Tried not to litter?	87	96
b. Talked with friends?	52	73
c. Recycled bottles or paper?	33	80
d. Voted for a candidate for this reason?	10	33
e. Contributed money?	8	34
f. Joined a conservation group?	6	14
g. Written a letter to your congressman?	5	16
h. Written a letter to the editor?	2	6
i. Picketed a store or business?	1	4
j. (None of these)	8	1

45. *Gallup:* Which of the following things, if any, have you or other household members done in recent years to try to improve the quality of the environment? (Percent)

	5/89	*4/90*
a. Contributed money to an environmental, conservation, or wildlife preservation group.		
Yes	49	49
No/don't know	51	51
b. Boycotted a company's products because of its record on the environment.		
Yes	29	28
No/don't know	71	72
c. Did volunteer work for an environmental conservation or wildlife protection group.		
Yes	16	18
No/don't know	84	82
d. Voluntarily recycled newspapers, glass, aluminum, motor oil, or other items.		
Yes	78	85
No/don't know	22	15

46. *Cambridge:* Now I am going to read a list of changes some people have made in their day-to-day behavior because of their concern about the environment. As I read each one, please tell me whether or not you and your household have made that kind of change in your day-to-day behavior. (Percent)

	7/87	*7/89*	*7/90*
a. Recyling used cans, bottles, or paper.			
Yes, have done	57	66	84
No, have not done	41	31	16
Not sure	1	3	. . .
b. Buying bottled drinking water.			
Yes, have done	25	30	26
No, have not done	73	66	73
Not sure	2	4	1
c. Stopping the use of aerosol spray cans.			
Yes, have done	40	41	71
No, have not done	56	55	27
Not sure	4	4	2
d. Buying products made of recycled material whenever possible.			
Yes, have done	39	44	82
No, have not done	50	45	15
Not sure	10	11	3
e. Avoiding the purchase of certain kinds of packaged food products because of the chemicals used in food production.			
Yes, have done	52	51	69
No, have not done	42	42	27
Not sure	6	6	4
f. Avoiding the purchase of certain kinds of fresh food because of the chemicals used in food production.			
Yes, have	32	44	49
No, have not done	61	50	47
Not sure	7	6	4
g. Avoiding the purchase of products by a company that pollutes the environment.			
Yes, have done	22	30	50
No, have not done	65	58	40
Not sure	13	12	10

Public Opinion Quarterly

Published for the American
Association for Public Opinion
Research by the University of
Chicago Press

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HELMUT NORPOTH and BRUCE BUCHANAN	Issue Trespassing
IN MEMORIAM	Eli Samplin Marks
THE POLLS	Review: The A. C. Nielsen People Meter System
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Spring 1992

Public Opinion Quarterly

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Public Opinion Quarterly (ISSN 0033-362X) Volume 56, 4 issues (1992)

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Published quarterly: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, by The University of Chicago Press, 5720 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL. Subscription rates, U.S.A.: institutions 1 year $40.00; individuals 1 year $20.00. Special rates available to members of AAPOR. Student subscription rate (with copy of validated ID), U.S.A.: individuals 1 year $18.00. In Canada, add 7% GST to subscription price. Outside of U.S.A., add $3.00 for each year's subscription to cover postage. Japanese subscription agent: Kinokuniya Company Ltd.

POSTMASTER: Please send all change of address notices to Public Opinion Quarterly, University of Chicago Press, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637.

Mail orders and direct subscription information to: Journals Fulfillment Department, University of Chicago Press, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637.

Single copy and back volume information furnished upon written request. Indexed by Public Affairs Information Services, Social Sciences Index, United States Political Science Documents, Combined Retrospective Index Sets (CRIS), and Political Science Abstracts (PSA). Available from University Microfilms International (UMI).

Editorial Office: Institute for Social Research
P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106
Business, Subscriptions, Back Issues: University of Chicago Press,
P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637
AAPOR: P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

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PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984. ♾

PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 56 / SPRING 1992 / NUMBER 1

Articles

Anti-Semitic Attitudes of the Mass Public: Estimates and Explanations Based on a Survey of the Moscow Oblast 1
JAMES L. GIBSON and RAYMOND M. DUCH

Public Opinion about AIDS Policies: The Role of Misinformation and Attitudes toward Homosexuals 29
VINCENT PRICE and MEI-LING HSU

The Road to German Unity: Mass Sentiment in East and West Germany 53
MANFRED KUECHLER

Little White Lies and Social Science Models: Correlated Response Errors in a Panel Study of Voting 77
STANLEY PRESSER and MICHAEL TRAUGOTT

Wanted: The Education President: Issue Trespassing by Political Candidates 87
HELMUT NORPOTH and BRUCE BUCHANAN

In Memoriam

Eli Samplin Marks, 1912–1991 100
NAOMI D. ROTHWELL and JACK ELINSON

The Polls

Review: How Good Is the A. C. Nielsen People-Meter System? A Review of the Report by the Committee on Nationwide Television Audience Measurement 102
J. RONALD MILAVSKY

Trends: Security and Political Attitudes in Israel: 1986–1991 116
ASHER ARIAN

Comment

Comment 129
WILLIAM C. ADAMS

Reply 130
DANIEL LINZ and EDWARD DONNERSTEIN

Note from the Editor 132

Book Reviews

Daniel Yankelovich, *Coming to Public Judgment: Making Democracy Work in a Complex World* 133
TOM W. SMITH

James A. Aho, *The Politics of Righteousness: Idaho Christian Patriotism* 134
THOMAS F. PETTIGREW

Paul J. Lavrakas and Jack Holley, eds., *Polling and Presidential Election Coverage* 136
MERVIN FIELD

LuAnn Aday, *Designing and Conducting Health Surveys: A Comprehensive Guide* 139
JAMES S. HOUSE

Manuscript Referees, 1990–1991 142

Notice to Contributors 144

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ANTI-SEMITIC ATTITUDES OF THE MASS PUBLIC:

ESTIMATES AND EXPLANATIONS BASED ON A SURVEY OF THE MOSCOW OBLAST

JAMES L. GIBSON
RAYMOND M. DUCH

Abstract In this article we examine anti-Semitism as expressed by a sample of residents of the Moscow Oblast (Soviet Union). Based on a survey conducted in 1990, we begin by describing anti-Jewish prejudice and support for official discrimination against Jews. We discover a surprisingly low level of expressed anti-Semitism among these Soviet respondents and virtually no support for state policies that discriminate against Jews. At the same time, many of the conventional hypotheses predicting anti-Semitism are supported in the Soviet case. Anti-Semitism is concentrated among those with lower levels of education, those whose personal financial condition is deteriorating, and those who oppose further democratization of the Soviet Union. We do not take these findings as evidence that anti-Semitism is a trivial problem in the Soviet Union but, rather, suggest that efforts to combat anti-Jewish movements would likely receive considerable support from ordinary Soviet people.

As the Soviet Union braces itself for continuing and widespread political, social, and economic turmoil, many fear that the age-old tendency for Jews to be held as scapegoats for failed policy will reemerge. With the opportunity provided by *glasnost* (or "openness") for more candid

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:1–28 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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expressions of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, those concerned with basic human rights have grown more and more disquieted.

Our purpose in this article is to assess levels of anti-Semitism in the contemporary Soviet Union. Focusing on data from a survey of public opinion in the Moscow Oblast, we describe how ordinary Moscow citizens feel about Jews on a number of different dimensions. Our premise is that anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union cannot be understood through an analysis of official state policy alone. Instead, we must also examine the values of the Soviet people. Since there have actually been few systematic attempts to assess how the public feels toward Jews, we provide a thorough description of attitudes toward Jews and anti-Semitism.[1]

We also address the distribution of anti-Semitism among several social, economic, and political groups in the Moscow Oblast. We are especially interested in how the economic and political turmoil in the country is affecting attitudes toward Jews. Relying on earlier research in the West, we also test hypotheses connecting personality attributes with anti-Semitism. We are reasonably successful in developing a model of the processes through which anti-Semitism is developed in individuals in the Soviet Union.

Finally, we examine the linkage between prejudice and support for discrimination. We discover that many residents of the Moscow Oblast hold private prejudices toward Jews but nonetheless fail to support official discrimination. These are some of the most important findings of our research.

There are certainly limits to what can be learned about anti-Semitism using survey data, and we do not believe that anti-Semitic attitudes are the only form of anti-Jewish feeling worthy of study. Yet we believe that by investigating anti-Semitism in the hearts and minds of ordinary Soviets, a better understanding of the popular roots of anti-Semitism can be gained. Such an understanding, as we argue in the conclusions, can assist considerably in assessing the perniciousness of anti-Semitism and the likelihood of change in the future.

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[1] There are some limited exceptions to the assertion that few attempts have been made to assess public feelings toward Jews. For instance, in the early Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System, 329 ex-Soviet citizens living in the West were interviewed in the period 1950–51. The research found that "10 percent of the respondents expressed a violent hostility to Jews. . . . In addition to those who expressed blatant anti-Semitic sentiments, approximately 25 percent of the respondents revealed various shadings of strongly hostile attitudes toward Jews" (Korey 1973, pp. 5–6). Based on interviews with 1,161 ex-Soviet citizens who had left the Soviet Union during the period 1977–80, Gitelman (1986) indicated that 61 percent reported frequent encounters with anti-Semitism (27 percent reported such encounters often and 34 percent had such encounters only sometimes). One obvious limitation of these studies is that they are based on very unrepresentative samples of both Soviet citizens and even Soviet émigrés. Due to the restricted nature of the samples, these studies do not provide a very reliable understanding of the dynamics of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union.

Historical Perspectives on Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union

To a greater degree than in most Western nations except Germany (and to perhaps a lesser degree than in most Eastern European nations), anti-Semitism has historically received rather consistent endorsement in the Soviet Union from the principal cultural and political institutions that help shape mass attitudes.[2] Under tsarist Russia, explicit legal provisions singled the Jews out for discriminatory treatment, and the teachings of the Russian Orthodox Church were explicitly anti-Semitic (Gitelman 1991, p. 142; Salow 1987). With the two leading political and cultural institutions preaching such ethnic hatred, it is hardly surprising that "pogrom" is in fact a word of Russian origin.

The situation changed, although only briefly, for the Jews after the Bolshevik Revolution. Lenin and his colleagues specifically attacked anti-Semitism and instituted policies that significantly opened up opportunities for Russian Jews. They were, for example, permitted to settle in urban areas. But these enlightened official attitudes lasted only until the 1930s when resentment over the advances of Jews in the new Soviet society increased considerably (Gitelman 1986). Official policy in the 1930s turned toward combating "petit bourgeois nationalism" and as part of this campaign officials worked to undermine expressions of ethnic and national distinctions. Particularly after the ascendancy of Stalin, official rhetoric increasingly sought out ethnic targets to blame for social and political ills.

Jews became an increasingly popular scapegoat during the Stalinist regime (Salow 1987, chaps. 13–16). Previous efforts to reduce anti-Semitism were abandoned and anti-Semitic sentiments were countenanced in official circles and publications. Stalin's Great Purges singled out Jews for removal from most positions of authority in Soviet society. Anti-Semitism reached its highest levels of official support in the post–World War II period under the stewardship of Stalin, who launched a campaign against Jews claiming that they were a potentially dangerous threat to the Soviet regime. This attack culminated in the now infamous "Doctors' Plot," in which Stalin maintained that Jewish doctors were attempting to murder high Soviet officials through inappropriate medical practices.

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[2] For a recent review of the historical roots of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, see Gitelman (1991).

Official policies discriminating against Jews continued well into the 1980s in the Soviet Union and could be categorized into three broad areas (Gitelman 1986, p. 194; see also Salow 1987, chap. 18). First, Jews were restricted from entering certain professions—specifically, higher-level positions in the party, the state, the administration of academia, the foreign service and the foreign trade apparatus, the secret police, and the armed forces. Second, Soviet authorities failed to censor the publication of viciously anti-Semitic works. And finally, the state prevented the establishment or improvement of facilities promoting Jewish culture, education, or language.

In 1985, the Soviet Union began a dramatic metamorphosis under the direction of Mikhail Gorbachev. The policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* promised a more liberal, tolerant, and open society. In starting this process of democratization—with its greater exposure to a panoply of ideological and political positions and more widespread involvement in movements challenging the status quo—hopes rose for a greater degree of tolerance, including tolerance toward Jews. Paradoxically, however, democratization has also unleashed popular sentiments that are neither liberal nor tolerant (Gitelman 1991). Under the newly instituted policies of Gorbachev, many fear that popular anti-Semitic sentiments will surface and gain considerable momentum. Thus, it is now especially propitious to try to assess the nature of anti-Semitism in the contemporary Soviet Union.

Of special concern to many is what lies in store for Jews as the Soviet Union enters a period of heightened political, economic, and social turmoil. Will the high levels of uncertainty and anxiety of Soviet citizens today result in higher levels of anti-Semitism? Will the process of democratization promote greater intolerance toward Jews? These are the sort of questions that stimulated our survey.

The Meaning and Origins of Anti-Semitism

Adorno and his colleagues conceptualize anti-Semitism as an "ideology"—a syndrome of beliefs. They assert: "The ideology consists of . . . *stereotyped negative opinions describing the Jews as threatening, immoral, and categorically different from non-Jews, and of hostile attitudes urging various forms of restriction, exclusion, and suppression as a means of solving 'the Jewish problem'* " (Adorno et al. 1950, p. 71). One can see in this definition a clear distinction between prejudice—holding stereotyped negative opinions—and support for discrimination—attitudes urging restrictions.[3] This definition of anti-Semitism comports well with our empirical efforts to identify dimensions of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union (these efforts are described in detail in the measurement section) and therefore will guide us throughout this analysis.

We have a number of hunches about why individuals become anti-Semitic. One of the most popular theories has to do with reactions to economic and political crisis. When economies and politics go sour, ordinary people often search for a scapegoat on which blame can be laid. Outbreaks of anti-Semitism do not erupt spontaneously; instead, they are triggered by deterioration of economic and political conditions. Throughout world history, Jews have often been targeted as scapegoats, and in the case of the Soviet Union (as well as tsarist Russia) Jews have played this role as well. Thus, one of our central hypotheses is that anti-Semitism is greatest among those who perceive their current economic situation to have deteriorated in the recent past.

As a concomitant, we also hypothesize that attitudes toward social change play an important role in the development of anti-Semitic beliefs. Especially in relatively traditional societies like the Soviet Union, those who tenaciously hold to the past, to conventional Russian orthodoxy, are more likely to be anti-Semitic. We expect that the supporters of change, of democratization and modernization, are less likely to hold anti-Jewish beliefs.

Research in the United States has consistently shown that level of education is one of the best predictors of level of anti-Semitism (e.g., Allport 1950, p. 407; Bettelheim and Janowitz 1964, p. 18; Hyman and Wright 1979; Quinley and Glock 1979; and Rosenfeld 1982). Education seems to reduce anti-Semitism through multiple pathways. First, there is a cognitive effect. To the extent that formal education increases one's analytical abilities, one is less likely to accept and apply simplistic stereotypes. Simply increasing the store of factual information can also dispel these improper generalizations. Stereotyping is crucial to the formation of anti-Semitic beliefs. Further, as part of a system of political socialization, educational institutions can also instill or reinforce values such as equality, fairness, and tolerance that mitigate anti-Semitic tendencies. Though we are not naive about the tenacity and durability of beliefs acquired through formal instruction, the social learning function is an important part of the role education plays in reducing anti-Semitism.

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[3] Allport (1950) provides a useful definition of prejudice: "An avertive or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to the group" (p. 8).

Another long-standing hypothesis is that anti-Semitism reflects the basic personality traits of individuals (see, e.g., Adorno et al. 1950). Since anti-Semitism relies so heavily on stereotyping, it is reasonable to expect that closed-mindedness is a significant predictor of levels of anti-Semitism. Those who are more closed-minded are in general more likely to accept stereotypes. Thus, we expect that they will endorse anti-Semitic statements.

To what degree is anti-Semitism related to other political beliefs? Is anti-Semitism an isolated or compartmentalized value, or is it closely integrated with other views? Weil (1985) argues that anti-Semitism—at least in the United States, West Germany, France, and Austria—is closely bundled with a group of other illiberal values. Others (e.g., Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982) have argued that ethnic intolerance is quite distinct from political intolerance. Thus, it is an open question whether anti-Semitism is connected to more basic democratic values. Given the importance of the democratization process in the Soviet Union, this question is of considerable interest.

Thus, our purpose here is not only to describe levels of anti-Semitism in the contemporary Soviet Union but also to test several hypotheses about its origins. Before turning to our results, it is necessary to consider some more general issues surrounding survey research in the Soviet Union.

Research Design and Measurement

The results we report here are drawn from a survey of residents of the Moscow Oblast. The survey was conducted from February 17, 1990, through March 4, 1990. A total of 504 Soviet citizens 16 years old or older was interviewed. The sample was selected using multistage probability selection methods (see App. for details). The field work was conducted by the Institute of Sociology, USSR Academy of Sciences, under the direction of Polina Kozyreva and Gennady Denisovsky. Unlike many Soviet surveys, the interviews were conducted face-to-face in the homes of the respondents. The respondents were not told that the survey was in any way connected with a U.S. research project.

The survey asked a broad array of questions on many topics. Interspersed throughout the questionnaire were questions about Jews. Even if Jews are a sensitive issue in the Soviet Union, it is highly unlikely that the respondents would view the questionnaire as oriented toward Jewish issues. Instead, we expect that most respondents perceived the

Jewish questions as simply one more set of contemporary issues about which they were being queried.

Do Soviet people respond candidly to interviewers posing difficult and sometimes sensitive questions? It is of course impossible to address this question definitively. There is, however, a variety of circumstantial evidence suggesting that the answers of the respondents were relatively truthful. One way to assess the quality of the responses is to ask the *interviewers* to evaluate each respondent. We did so with a question that asked about the honesty and openness of the responses. Since the same technique was used in a 1987 U.S. survey, we can compare the Soviet results with American findings.[4]

Nearly all of the American respondents (96 percent) were perceived by the interviewers as being relatively open. While 80 percent of the Soviet respondents were similarly perceived, one-fifth were judged to be not as honest and open as most respondents. These findings are reassuring both in that the great majority of respondents were perceived as answering relatively honestly and, as should be expected, in that there was less openness in the Soviet Union than in the United States. Data such as these are far from definitive, but do suggest that the quality of the responses is reasonably high.

Survey respondents are notorious for fabricating opinions even when they do not have them (e.g., Schuman and Presser 1981). They do so largely because of the desire not to appear ill-informed or uncooperative. Consequently, one threat to the veracity of the data is this tendency to give answers to questions about which the respondent has no true opinions. We can assess the magnitude of this effect using a question that asks about feelings toward a fictitious group. The respondents were asked whether they felt positively or negatively toward "Kalakshists"—a group that does not exist.[5] In the introduction to the question (which asked about 11 groups), the respondents were told to indicate if they have no opinion toward the group. The 1987 U.S. survey used a similar technique, asking the respondents about "The Society for a New America." In the U.S. survey, 30 percent of the respondents expressed a view toward the fictitious group, with the rest offering no opinion. In the Moscow survey, fully 81 percent claimed no opinion toward Kalakshists, while another 8 percent expressed "neutrality" toward the group. Thus, less than 11 percent expressed a view toward the fictitious group. Again, these data are not definitive but they certainly suggest a level of candor among the Soviet respondents that is reasonably high.

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[4] The U.S. survey was conducted under the direction of James L. Gibson, University of Houston. That survey was a panel design, with interviews in the spring and summer of 1987. In-person interviews were conducted with a sample drawn through area-probability methods. Since the Moscow survey so closely parallels many of the questions from that survey, several comparisons will be made throughout this article.

[5] "Kalakshists" is actually a fictitious word that was derived from one of Gennady Denisovsky's metro stops in Moscow. Unfortunately, however, we later learned that the name sounds something like "Salashists," the name of a group of World War II Hungarian fascists. This is also the name the Soviet media applied to the reformers in the 1956 Hungarian uprising. To the extent that these respondents remember anything about the Hungarian group (and we doubt that many do), they are cuing on a very explicitly political group. This, by the way, is why those who actually responded toward the group responded overwhelmingly negatively. We cannot claim that Kalakshists are strictly comparable to the Society for a New America. No comparison is ever perfect—this is just one bit of evidence that we marshal within a larger argument about the candor of the respondents. At a second point in the Soviet questionnaire, we asked about their level of confidence in "Kukhterists," another fictitious group. Fully 87 percent expressed no opinion toward the group.

Furthermore, as will become clear below, on many issues the respondents were willing to give strongly antiregime responses. We find little evidence in the survey that people were expressing views that they thought others would like to hear.

Research in the United States on race relations is often bedeviled by "social desirability" effects. That is, it is argued that overt racism has become so completely delegitimized in American society that respondents who are actually racists are unwilling to express their views to an interviewer. They therefore give what they perceive to be socially desirable answers to racial questions, leading survey researchers to underestimate the true levels of racism in the United States.

Soviet respondents are most likely also sensitive toward social conformity. But how would this affect answers to the anti-Semitism questions? In particular, can we assume that anti-Semitism is socially undesirable in the contemporary Soviet Union?

Many writers have argued not only that anti-Semitism is not undesirable, but that it is the socially accepted norm in the Soviet Union. As Bill Keller, chief of the Moscow bureau of the *New York Times* recently reported: "It is not just the weird paramilitary order, Pamyat, that is obsessed by the Jews. In conversations with educated, cultured Russians who would never be caught dead wearing a black T-shirt, in the pages of official magazines and newspapers favored by the nationalists, and in debates at the Russian Writers' Union, 'the Jewish question' looms large. And with the coming of glasnost, discussion of it has become much less inhibited" (Keller 1990, p. 48). If this is indeed the case, and if there are indeed currently cross-currents in attitudes toward Jews in the Soviet Union, it is likely that the results we report here are neither greatly inflated nor deflated. We do not believe that social norms about Jews are sufficiently strong or consensual for survey questions about anti-Semitism in the contemporary Soviet Union to be as susceptible to the social desirability effects we observe in the United States. Thus, while we are mindful that survey results must always be treated cautiously, there are many reasons to believe that anti-Semitism can be studied successfully in the Soviet Union using conventional survey research methods.

Measuring Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union

We have measured anti-Semitism by offering the respondents a set of statements about Jews and asking them whether they agree or disagree with each. As we noted above, anti-Semitism includes more than simple prejudice against Jews. It also involves attitudes toward whether there should be discrimination directed against Jews. Thus, we asked the Moscow Oblast sample questions about Jews representing both their own prejudices and their views toward systematic discrimination toward Jews. Their responses, collapsed to a trichotomy, are shown in table 1.[6]

The most outstanding aspect of table 1 is the rather large, but variable, percentage of respondents who claim to be "uncertain" about these statements. The percentage uncertain ranges from 45 percent for the item about Jews choosing money to 7 percent on the freedom to decide whether to emigrate.[7] An unusual number of respondents is unwilling to assert either explicitly positive or explicitly negative attitudes toward Jews.

Does this reflect a reticence on the part of the respondents to express anti-Semitic views openly? One possibility is that the highly charged

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[6] For the nine respondents in the survey who claimed to be Jewish, these questions of course have a very different meaning. (Note that in 1989, 2.9 percent of the population in Moscow was Jewish [Tishkov 1990, p. 122]. The figure for the entire oblast is somewhat smaller.) It is not surprising to note, therefore, that the nine Jews gave very few anti-Semitic responses and only a handful of "uncertain" responses. All of the data reported in this article would underestimate anti-Semitism ever so slightly if we were to include these respondents in the analysis. Consequently, we have excluded them from all of the analysis. It should not be assumed, however, that all respondents who think of themselves as partially or fully Jewish have been excluded from the sample. Determining who is Jewish in the Soviet Union is not such an easy matter. For instance, children of mixed Jewish and non-Jewish parents have long had the choice not to declare Jewishness as their nationality for purposes of their internal passports. While no reliable figures exist, our guess is that in the past an overwhelming percentage of these children claimed a non-Jewish nationality. Nor have we identified those who have a Jewish spouse. Thus, our data still underestimate anti-Semitism to the extent that these people hold attitudes favorable toward Jews. We have also investigated whether Jewish interviewers had any effect on the respondents. Of the 56 interviewers employed, two were Jews. In terms of the anti-Semitism items, the responses of the subjects interviewed by Jewish interviewers do not differ from the responses of subjects interviewed by non-Jewish interviewers.

[7] The percentage "neutral" in the 11 items used in the 1981 Yankelovich U.S. survey ranges from 7 percent to 26 percent (Martire and Clark 1982, p. 35). For useful reviews of recent survey research on anti-Semitism in the United States, see Lipset (1987) and Rosenfeld (1982).

Table 1. Views toward Jews, Moscow Oblast, 1990

	Percent			Factor Loadings		
	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	One	Two	*N*
When it comes to choosing between people and money, Jews will choose money.	28.4*	44.5	27.1	.72	.14	490
Jews deserve to be punished because they killed Christ.	8.8*	32.8	58.4	.57	−.06	488
Jews have too much influence over Russian culture.	20.6*	28.6	50.8	.51	−.07	490
It would be fine with me if a Jew who had a similar family (economic) background as mine joined my close family by marriage.	31.9	40.9	27.2*	.48	−.01	489
More than any other group in society, it is the Jews who are responsible for the problems the Soviet Union is experiencing today.	7.4*	19.4	73.2	.31	−.23	489

Jews who wish to emigrate to Israel are a subversive element in society.	8.8*	10.4	80.8	.30	−.28	492
The government should make every effort to see that the rights of Jews to equal educational opportunity are not violated throughout the Soviet Union.	85.3	9.2	5.5*	.05	−.71	490
The government should make every effort to see that the rights of Jews to equal employment opportunities are respected throughout the Soviet Union.	85.7	9.6	4.7*	−.09	−.69	488
Jews should be free to decide for themselves whether they want to remain in the Soviet Union or emigrate.	88.8	7.3	3.9*	.10	−.59	490

NOTE.—The most anti-Semitic responses are indicated with an asterisk. Cols. 1–3 in each row total to 100 percent, except for rounding error.

nature of the Jewish issue in the Soviet Union has made people unwilling to commit to either side on these issues.

On the other hand, some have argued that uncertainty signals apathy and indifference. This is not, however, a benign apathy; instead, it represents important potential support for anti-Semitism. Selznick and Steinberg (1969) make this point in the context of the rise of Hitler and the Nazis: "How many Germans actively supported the anti-Semitic program of the Nazis is impossible to say. But that most Germans were indifferent to the fate of the Jews is hardly open to doubt. The crucial question, therefore, is not the extent to which [people] advocate or would support political anti-Semitism but the extent to which they would be indifferent and apathetic should it arise. . . . When humane and democratic values are at stake, opinionlessness may have grave consequences" (pp. 51, 60). We cannot be positive exactly what those who are uncertain about these queries think about Jews, but from several points of view these findings give cause for worry.

A second impression one quickly gains from this table is that expressed anti-Semitism is not particularly widespread in Moscow. Very large majorities oppose discrimination against Jews in job and educational opportunities and believe that Jews should be able to decide for themselves whether to emigrate. There is not widespread evidence that Jews are thought of as scapegoats for the current problems of the Soviet Union—nearly three-fourths of the sample reject the proposition that Jews bear primary responsibility for the country's current difficulties. A cursory glance at the figures in the table would suggest that at least some forms of anti-Semitism are rejected by a substantial majority of Soviet citizens, and indeed, fully 48 percent of the respondents do not agree to a single anti-Semitic statement (and another 26 percent accept only a single such statement).

At the same time, however, there are some items that reveal substantial minorities holding anti-Semitic views. For instance, roughly a quarter of the respondents would not welcome a Jew into their family; a similar number subscribes to the stereotype that Jews are more committed to money than to people. Fully one in five of the residents of the Moscow Oblast assert that Jews have too much influence over Russian culture. And if we were to consider only the percentages rejecting anti-Semitism, there are a number of items on which there is sharp division (e.g., the item about punishing Jews for killing Christ). Though a majority of respondents seems not to be predisposed toward anti-Semitism, a substantial and possibly important minority is.

It is useful to pause for a moment and consider what our expectations are about public opinion even within the most anti-Jewish polities. Though no rigorous empirical data seem to exist, we can well imagine that anti-Semitism even at the height of the power of the Third

Reich in Germany was far less than unanimous. The degree of misery that is caused by anti-Semitism is not necessarily a function of the size of the percentage of ordinary citizens holding anti-Semitic views.[8] Thus, we must reserve judgment on the implications of these opinions until we can better understand how they are distributed throughout segments of Soviet society.

Still, we are confronted with findings that suggest somewhat less anti-Semitism in Greater Moscow than we expected to find. We can think of several possible explanations for this anomaly. First, perceptions are often in error. It is quite possible that observers overestimate levels of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union because they are too much impressed by highly publicized incidents of anti-Jewish agitation. It is also possible that anti-Semitism has lost legitimacy in contemporary Moscow and that people will not express their private views on this matter. If so, we have underestimated levels of anti-Semitism.

We also note that the relatively large percentage of respondents who are "uncertain" about the anti-Jewish statements may well be evidence of a substantial latent anti-Semitism. Our statistical techniques simply cannot discern the real meaning of these uncertain responses.

Finally, it may be that "the Jewish question" has not yet become politicized in the Soviet Union. That is, no segment of the Soviet leadership has made direct and open anti-Semitic appeals to the mass public; anti-Jewish sentiment is not at present politically valuable. The salience of Jews as a political issue simply pales in comparison to other issues that are more pressing for ordinary Soviet people.

In order to analyze the distribution and origins of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, it is useful to derive a scale from the data reported in table 1. We have done so through the use of factor analysis. As the data in table 1 reveal, this set of nine items divides nicely into two primary dimensions.[9] The first we label "anti-Semitic prejudice" because the factor is most clearly defined by the items expressing negative stereotypes about Jews. The second dimension is "support for anti-Semitic discrimination" and is best defined by the job and education discrimination items, as well as by the item concerning the right to emigrate. These three items represent support for discrimination because they directly address support or opposition for government policies of discrimination against Jews. The correlation between scores on the two factors is strong (r = .69), indicating that those who are more prejudiced against Jews are more likely to support discriminatory policy. However, the relationship is not so strong as to undermine the utility of differentiating between prejudice and support for discrimination.[10]

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[8] As Weil (1980, p. 153) noted: "My analysis has suggested that levels of prejudice or hostility to certain groups need not necessarily be high in normal times for tragedy to result from a crisis."

[9] Common factor analysis with biquartimin oblique rotation was used. Since the response set shown to the respondents explicitly placed "uncertain" between "agree" and "disagree," we have scored those responses at 3 on the 5-point scale used for each of the items. The initial factor extraction resulted in two factors, with eigenvalues of 3.2, and 1.2, respectively (the eigenvalue of the third factor was .94). Together, these factors account for half of the variance in the items. The two factors that emerged from the oblique rotation are moderately to strongly correlated (and this should give pause to interpreting the results of earlier research that used orthogonal rotation). It should be noted that some authors (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950) identify several subdimensions to anti-Semitism. Others (e.g., Martire and Clark 1982) discover several dimensions to anti-Semitism but analyze only one. Given the limited number of items that could be asked on our survey, it is reasonable for us to consider only the dimensions of prejudice and support for discrimination.

The Salience of Anti-Semitism

From the point of view of Americans and other Westerners, anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union is an issue of considerable importance. But do the residents of the Moscow Oblast themselves perceive the issue with the same gravity? In particular, do they perceive that anti-Semitism exists in the Soviet Union? Table 2 reports the perceptions of the survey respondents on this score.

The first portion of table 2 reports the perception of our respondents of the extent of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. As might be expected, most of those surveyed believe that some Soviets are anti-Semitic but that most are not. About 17 percent of the sample believes that anti-Semitism is relatively rare, while 14 percent sees it as quite common. In terms of change in levels of anti-Semitism, about one-third of the sample believes that anti-Semitism is on the rise, while only a small proportion considers it to be declining. Another one-third perceives no change in levels of anti-Semitism, while about one-fifth cannot judge. In general there is a fairly strong tendency for those who see anti-Semitism as being more widespread to view it as being on the rise—approximately 30 percent of the subjects view anti-Semitism as fairly common and as becoming more widespread. This is a substantial portion of the population.[11]

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[10] These two sets of items are internally fairly reliable. Cronbach's alpha for the prejudice scale is .70; for the three-item discrimination scale, alpha is .71.

[11] Some care must be taken in interpreting these data because many of those who perceive anti-Semitism as widespread are themselves anti-Semites. There is also a slight tendency for anti-Semites to view anti-Semitism as being on the rise. Thus, what we may be observing here is a form of cognitive dissonance reduction. Many of those who hold anti-Jewish views legitimize their beliefs by asserting that most Soviets agree with them. Among those who are not anti-Semitic themselves, few believe that anti-Semitism is widespread.

Table 2. Perceptions of Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, 1990

Question/Answer	Percentage
How widespread would you say anti-Jewish feeling is in the Soviet Union today?	
Most people are anti-Jewish	14.3
Some are anti-Jewish	51.5
Very few people are anti-Jewish	17.0
Almost no one is anti-Jewish	3.7
Don't know	13.5
Total	100.0
N	(489)
Do you think that anti-Jewish feeling is on the rise around here today, is it diminishing, or is it about the same as it has been?	
On the rise	36.2
Is diminishing	3.5
About the same	34.8
No anti-Jewish feeling	2.7
Don't know	22.9
Total	100.1
N	(489)
Do you think that the government should be doing more than it is to fight against anti-Semitism today in the Soviet Union?	
Yes, should do more	55.9
No, shouldn't do more	16.7
No anti-Semitism	3.5
Don't know	23.9
Total	100.0
N	(490)

At the same time, perceptions of rising anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union are somewhat related to the respondent's level of education. Those with more education are more likely to perceive a rise in anti-Semitism. To the extent that the views of the educated segment of the population are more informed, the problem of anti-Semitism in the future is more ominous.

Table 2 also reports the percentage of the Moscow sample asserting that the government should do more than it is to fight anti-Semitism. A clear majority of the respondents supports additional government efforts against anti-Semitism. Indeed, the figure is all the more striking when it is adjusted for those without an opinion; among those with an opinion, nearly three-fourths believe that the Soviet government should step up its efforts to eliminate anti-Semitism.

To this point we have established that there is some anti-Semitism in Moscow and that many ordinary citizens recognize it. It is now useful to consider whether the anti-Semitism that exists is distributed evenly across the population or whether there are segments of the citizenry in which these views are more common.

The Distribution of Anti-Semitism

How is anti-Semitism distributed throughout the Moscow Oblast sample? We can get some idea of the locus of anti-Semitism by examining the average prejudice scores for several different segments of society. These figures are reported in table 3.

There are a few surprises in table 3. First, age differences in anti-Semitism are not nearly as strong as is commonly observed in the United States. Even the oldest group of the residents of the Moscow Oblast is not markedly more anti-Semitic than are young people. In the United States, many point to the decline of anti-Semitism as a consequence of generational replacement (e.g., Martire and Clark 1982). That is, the older generations that have died have taken their anti-Semitic attitudes to the grave and have been replaced by relatively less anti-Semitic individuals. This gives hope to the possibility that anti-Semitism will be slowly eradicated. In the Soviet Union, generational replacement will not reduce anti-Semitism since the younger generation is no less anti-Semitic than their elders.

Class differences in the Moscow Oblast are only weakly associated with levels of anti-Semitism. Those who earn fewer rubles per month tend only slightly to be more anti-Semitic than those with greater income. Even when we use a more sensitive measure of economic class (the ownership of a large number of consumer goods), the relationship is quite weak. We also note that gender differences in anti-Semitism are small and that members of the Communist party are only slightly less anti-Semitic than those who are not members.

It is often posited that religiosity is associated with anti-Semitism, although there is certainly some contrary evidence from U.S. studies (e.g., Martire and Clark 1982). Our data hint of such a relationship: those who claim to be highly religious are more anti-Semitic, but they are also quite small in number. At the other extreme, those who assert that they are atheists (which in the Soviet context means antireligious) are the least anti-Semitic. Among the great bulk of people in the center,

Table 3. The Distribution of Anti-Semitic Prejudice, Moscow Oblast, 1990

	Prejudice			
Attribute	Mean	Standard Deviation	*N*	Eta
Age group				.11
13–29	−.06	.81	109	
30–39	−.07	.81	143	
40–49	−.02	.84	97	
50–59	.07	.96	88	
60–69	.28	.84	34	
70–79	.03	1.13	12	
Monthly income				.09
Less than 60 rubles	.18	.99	25	
60–100 rubles	.03	.81	159	
101–150 rubles	.02	.93	150	
151–200 rubles	−.12	.79	88	
201–300 rubles	−.16	.76	37	
More than 300 rubles	−.04	1.03	13	
Gender				.07
Male	.07	.89	224	
Female	−.06	.82	260	
Membership in the Communist party				.08
Active member	−.22	.58	36	
Inactive member	−.07	.83	52	
Not a member	.03	.88	396	
Religiosity				.11
Highly religious	.29	1.35	17	
Religious	.04	.90	124	
Not religious	−.01	.82	279	
Atheist	−.22	.69	42	
Level of education				.29
Unfinished secondary	.48	.98	56	
Finished secondary	.09	.82	246	
Unfinished tertiary	−.06	.76	30	
Finished tertiary	−.31	.78	151	
Personal financial condition				.18
Much better off	−.36	.94	18	
Somewhat better off	−.08	.79	100	
No change	−.10	.81	178	
Somewhat worse off	.08	.92	106	
Much worse off	.31	.89	65	

Table 3 (*Continued*)

Attribute	Prejudice Mean	 Standard Deviation	 N	Eta
Too much democracy in the Soviet Union				.24
Disagree strongly	−.35	.80	54	
Disagree	−.13	.75	197	
Uncertain	.03	.82	70	
Agree	.26	.85	122	
Agree strongly	.23	1.19	41	

NOTE.—Higher means indicate greater degrees of prejudice. The standard deviation is a measure of heterogeneity within each of the demographic groups. The range of the prejudice index is from approximately −2 to +2. N is the number of respondents in the group. The independent variables were constructed as follows. Age: "In what year were you born?" The interviewer recorded the respondent's age at the time of the interview. The age data were then recoded into the categories displayed above. Income: "What is the average monthly income per family member?" Gender: The interviewer recorded the respondent's gender. Membership in the Communist party: This was one of a series of questions that asked, "Which organizations are you a member of? Would you say you are an active member?" Religiosity: This item asked respondents to look at a card and tell the interviewer, "Which of the categories best describe your attitude toward religion?" Education: "What is the highest level of education you have reached?" Personal financial condition: "We are interested in how people are getting along materially these days. Would you say that you (and your family living here) are better off than you were a year ago?" Respondents' answers to this question were coded into the categories "better off," "worse off," "no change," or "don't know." The next question asked respondents who reported a change in material conditions if they were much better/worse off or somewhat better/worse off. These two items were then combined into a variable with the categories displayed above. Democracy: This item asked respondents their opinion of the statement "There is too much democracy in the Soviet Union today."

the difference in anti-Semitism between being religious and not being religious is trivial.

Level of education, however, is a strong predictor of anti-Semitism. Indeed, of the factors shown in table 3, level of education is the most strongly related to anti-Semitism. The strong effect of education in reducing anti-Semitism is in some respects a little surprising in light of the historical antipathy toward Jews in the Soviet Union. Most research in the United States and other liberal democracies tends to report at least a moderate relationship between level of education and a panoply of liberal and democratic values.[12] Yet Weil (1985) has recently argued that this effect is "weaker, nonexistent, or sometimes even reversed in nonliberal democracies or countries which did not have liberal-democratic regime forms in earlier decades, compared to countries which have been liberal democratic for a long time" (p. 470). Certainly then, one would not expect such a strong relationship in the case of the Soviet Union. To the extent that the salutary effects of education are due to greater exposure to and comprehension of official cultural norms, then one would expect that more education might be associated with more anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. This is clearly not the case.

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[12] For a summary of U.S. findings on the education–anti-Semitism linkage, see Rosenfeld (1982). Indeed, perhaps the most important dissenting voice on this issue is Jackman (e.g., Jackman and Muha 1984).

The effect of education in reducing anti-Semitism may instead be related to the inherent irrationality of anti-Semitism. That is, those who are more educated are probably less likely to engage in stereotyping—of any sort—than those with less education. They are more likely to cast explanations of social phenomena in complex terms, rather than adopt simplistic explanations. Education also increases consistency between abstractly formulated values and concrete applications. Thus, we would be less likely to find well-educated people who subscribe to a general norm (e.g., equal access to education for all), while also believing in an inconsistent application of the norms (e.g., Jews should be denied access to education). Internal cognitive strains toward consistency diminish anti-Semitism (at least in egalitarian polities). All of these attributes probably serve to reduce levels of anti-Semitism among the more educated segment of the Soviet population.

In the context of the contemporary Soviet Union, education may have a somewhat different influence on anti-Semitism. We hypothesize that those with more education are generally more committed to democratic values.[13] This commitment to democracy then tempers anti-Semitism. Thus, we hypothesize that those who support democracy are less anti-Semitic than those who oppose it.

Our survey included several measures of support for democratic values. The most direct measure is perhaps the most useful. The subjects were asked whether they agreed or disagreed (and how strongly) with the following simple statement: "There is too much democracy in the Soviet Union today." It is perhaps surprising to note that fully one-third of the respondents agreed or agreed strongly with this statement and that another 14 percent was uncertain. Democracy is certainly not an untainted symbol in Moscow today.

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[13] In research in the United States, this is one of the strongest and most consistent relationships observed. See, e.g., Bobo and Licari (1989). For an analysis of support for democratic values in the Soviet Union, see Gibson and Duch (1990b) and Gibson, Duch, and Tedin (1990).

But are supporters of democracy less anti-Semitic? Yes, and substantially so. While anti-Semitism is relatively rare among supporters of democracy (and even among those who are uncertain), it is considerably more common among democracy's opponents. This is one of the strongest relationships we have discovered.

The Soviet Union is today a cauldron of political, social, and economic change. Like the United States in the 1930s, nearly every aspect of traditional Soviet ideology and dogma is being reconsidered. The most germane aspect of change is in the personal economic circumstances of individual citizens. Our questions on these conditions reveal a worrisome, though perhaps not dismal, condition of the Soviet people. Only 25 percent perceive their financial condition to have improved in the last year, while 36 percent think they are worse off. The residents of the Moscow Oblast are also quite concerned about prices: over two-thirds of the respondents complained about the high price of food and nearly as many complained about the price of vital necessities and other goods. Only on the question of unemployment do these respondents express few worries. Thus, the picture painted by the survey results (in 1990) is one of a discouraged and dispirited populace. These are the sorts of political and economic conditions that have in the past given rise to outbreaks of anti-Semitism.

The important issue here is thus whether this personal dissatisfaction translates into anti-Semitism. The conventional expectation is that "whenever anxiety increases, accompanied by a loss of predictability in life, people tend to define their deteriorated situations in terms of scapegoats" (Allport 1950, p. 219). Thus, we expect that for some segment of the Soviet population, the current turmoil activates anti-Semitic beliefs. The inadequacies of the political system may be attributed to the connivances of Jews. Consequently, we expect to find anti-Semitism highest among those who are disaffected with the current conditions in the Soviet Union.

This hypothesis is strongly supported by the data in table 3—those who report their personal financial condition to have deteriorated recently are more anti-Semitic than those whose condition has not changed or has improved. Given the current economic conditions in the Soviet Union, this finding is foreboding.

Perhaps it is not just recent change in one's financial condition that affects levels of anti-Semitism. Perhaps it is a more general fear of social change. Many have written about the deep-seated apprehension about the future that is common in the Soviet Union today. We term this view "social conservatism." It is the preference for a social world that is immutable, and it is conservative in the sense that it opposes change (see Feldman 1989). Thus, we hypothesize that social conservatives hold more anti-Semitic views than those who welcome change.[14]

Once more, our data support the hypothesis: social conservatives harbor more anti-Semitic beliefs than do social liberals ($r = .33$). Traditionalists who are threatened by social change are much more likely to hold anti-Semitic views. Thus, it seems that anti-Semitism is concentrated among those most resistant to modernization and democratization.

From the beginning of modern social science inquiry into the etiology of anti-Semitism, personality has been considered a contributing factor (e.g., Adorno et al. 1950). We focus here on one particular attribute that has often been shown to predict intolerance: dogmatism (e.g., Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982). Dogmatism, or "closed-mindedness," was first proposed by Rokeach (1960) as an important personality attribute. Perhaps the most relevant attribute of dogmatism is the tendency to dichotomize beliefs into strict categories of acceptance and rejection. People who are more dogmatic are quite hostile to beliefs that differ from their own, in part because these beliefs are seen as threatening. For obvious reasons, then, we hypothesize that those who are more dogmatic are more anti-Semitic.[15]

Our data indicate a substantial and significant relationship between anti-Semitism and dogmatism ($r = .24$). As dogmatism increases, so too does anti-Jewish feeling. We take this finding as confirmation of the long-standing hypothesis that psychological insecurity enhances perceptions of threats from outgroups, while reinforcing the tendency to stereotype, resulting in this case in prejudice toward Jews.

[14] The responses to the social conservatism items were collected using Likert response sets. All those responding "don't know" were recoded to the center category on the Likert scale ("uncertain"). Percentages reported are the percentage giving the conservative response: 107. People should try to adapt to the rules of society rather than fighting them (Agree—19.2 percent); 109. People should not try to change how society works but just accept the way it is (Agree—10.4 percent); 110. People should constantly try to question why things are the way they are (Disagree—8.0 percent). When factor analyzed, one significant factor emerged with an eigenvalue of 1.68 (explaining 55.9 percent of the variance). Cronbach's alpha for the scale is .60.

[15] Dogmatism was measured in this research through four items. The responses to the items were collected using Likert response sets. All those responding "don't know" were recoded to the center category on the Likert scale ("uncertain"). The items, with their collapsed frequencies for the percentage "dogmatic," are: 22. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who are for the truth and those who are against it (Agree—54.3 percent); 23. A group which tolerates too many differences of opinion among its own members cannot exist for long (Agree—56.0 percent); 50. Of all the different philosophies that exist in the world there is probably only one that is correct (Agree—32.7 percent); 56. In the long run the best way to live is to pick friends and associates whose tastes and beliefs are close to one's own (Agree—62.6 percent). One significant factor emerged from the factor analysis of these items. It had an eigenvalue of 1.62 (explaining 40.5 percent of the variance). The reliability of the scale is .51 (Cronbach's alpha).

Table 4. A Multivariate Analysis of Anti-Semitism, Moscow Oblast, 1990

	Bivariate Correlation	Multiple Regression[a]	
		Beta	*b*
Social conservatism	.32*	.23*	.24*
Level of education	−.29*	−.14*	−.12*
Declining financial status	.17*	.15*	.12*
Closed-mindedness	.23*	.10	.12
Opposition to democracy	.23*	.10	.07

[a] The dependent variable is anti-Jewish prejudice. $R^2 = .19$. $N = 461$.

* Coefficient is significant at .01 or less. All other coefficients are significant at .05 or less.

Thus, our strongest findings to this point are that the level of education, support for democracy, change in financial condition, social conservatism, and closed-mindedness have reasonably strong relationships with levels of anti-Semitism. In order to explore this process a bit further we must turn to a multivariate analysis. Table 4 reports the bivariate and multivariate relationships between these variables and anti-Jewish prejudice.

Although each of these variables has a direct, independent, and statistically significant impact on anti-Semitism, the influence of three of the variables is particularly noteworthy. Those who are more resistant to change, who have lower levels of education, and whose financial position has deteriorated in the last year are more anti-Semitic. Beyond this, those opposing democratization and those who are more closed-minded are also a bit more anti-Semitic. By the standards of public opinion research, there is a substantial degree of connection between these variables and levels of anti-Semitism (as reflected in the R^2 of .19). Anti-Semitism among Moscow residents is concentrated in a particular segment of the population. This segment is poorly educated and quite resistant to social change. Perhaps the anti-Semitism of these people has been exacerbated by their declining financial condition. Traditionalists who feel directly the economic turmoil of the contemporary Soviet Union are most likely to hold anti-Semitic views.

Connecting Prejudice and Discrimination

We have seen that levels of anti-Semitism are reasonably well predicted from the social and psychological attributes of individual Soviets. While we cannot directly address the connection between individual prejudice and discriminatory behavior, we can consider the degree to which prejudice is connected with preferences for public policies that discriminate against Jews.

As table 1 above reported, there is not much sentiment in favor of discriminatory policy in the Moscow Oblast—overwhelming majorities of citizens agree that Jews ought to receive equal employment and educational opportunities and that they should be free to decide whether to emigrate. We have also seen that a majority of the respondents support increased governmental efforts to eradicate anti-Semitism. Thus, from this cursory view of the data, there is very little support indeed for policy that discriminates against Jews.

Using a trichotomized version for the anti-Semitism index, the overwhelming majority of those who are not anti-Semitic do not favor any discrimination—91 percent (N = 284) support none of the statements favoring discrimination. This is to be expected, of course. But the data also reveal that the overwhelming majority of those who are uncertain (95 percent; N = 130) would not support any of these forms of discrimination. This is indeed a surprising finding. Finally, even among those who hold anti-Semitic views, 69 percent (N = 55) do not favor limiting the educational, employment, or emigration rights of Jews. There is simply little support for anti-Jewish discrimination among any segment of the Moscow population, including most of those who are personally prejudiced toward Jews.

Why is the connection between prejudice and discrimination so weak? It is reasonable to argue that for many Soviets, commitment to the norm of equality is so strong as to overwhelm personal distaste for Jews. As our survey has shown, education and jobs are seen in the Soviet Union as the entitlements of all citizens (see Gibson and Duch 1990a). This belief in equality may neutralize some of the pernicious effects of prejudice. We must certainly be careful about generalizing these findings too widely. It is quite possible that had we inquired about other, perhaps more subtle forms of discrimination, we would have found additional support. We feel quite secure in concluding that prejudice does not inevitably produce support for discrimination. Whether the Soviet people would support any forms of discrimination against Jews we cannot judge.

Summary and Conclusions

We feel obliged to open this concluding section with a reiteration of the by now familiar limitations of this study. First and foremost, we cannot generalize our findings beyond Moscow. Second, there are limits to what can be discovered in a survey of this sort. We cannot determine what sort of discriminatory behavior (if any) the respondents engage in, and we know that there is commonly a gap between attitudes and actual behavior. All of our findings must be discounted to the degree to which our respondents were untruthful with the interviewers. And we recognize fully that the temporal stability of many of these findings is limited, especially given the rapid rate of change in the contemporary Soviet Union. Nor do we make any claims that the anti-Semitism we have studied is the anti-Semitism that is perceived and experienced by Jews in the Soviet Union. Due to these limitations we have tried to be appropriately cautious in our conclusions.

Nonetheless, the key finding of this research is that expressed anti-Semitism is more uncommon in Moscow than many (including us) had suspected. Indeed, given the perceptions of the respondents themselves, the low level of anti-Semitism we discovered might be surprising even to them. We do not argue that this level of anti-Semitism is unimportant—indeed, we have suggested precisely the opposite conclusion. Pogroms do not require a vote of endorsement from a majority. And we must temper this judgment by noting that on some items a large percentage of respondents claimed to be "uncertain" and that in several instances, the percentage of the residents of the Moscow Oblast who are "anti-anti-Semitism" is not large. Nonetheless, a significant and substantial proportion of the respondents endorsed not a single anti-Semitic statement.

We also found that support for policies that discriminate against Jews is relatively rare. Indeed, a clear majority of the sample—including some of those holding anti-Jewish views—support greater government action against anti-Semitism. If the Moscow government needs a "mandate" from its constituents to combat anti-Semitism, these data clearly provide one.

At the same time, we discovered that anti-Semitism varies according to level of education in the Soviet Union. In keeping with a great deal of earlier research in the West, the more poorly educated, the greater the anti-Semitism. We also failed to unearth the sort of relationship between age and anti-Semitism that many have found in the Western context.

While a survey is just a snapshot of opinion at one point in time, we have discovered some relationships that speak to the question of change in opinion. Most important, we found that those who are resistant to change—social conservatives—are most likely to hold anti-Semitic views. More specifically, those whose financial condition is deteriorating are more anti-Semitic. To the extent that the economic condition of ordinary citizens in the Soviet Union continues to deteriorate, this finding is quite ominous.

Our findings also underscore just how important the democratization process is for Soviet Jews. Supporters of democracy are considerably less anti-Semitic than are the opponents of democratic change. Democratization may provide greater opportunity for the expression of latent anti-Semitism, but democrats are decidedly not anti-Semitic. For the democrats to lose in the current struggle in the Soviet Union would be unfortunate not only from the general point of view of freedom and liberty but also from the specific self-interest of opponents of anti-Semitism.

What of the future for Jews in the Soviet Union? Perhaps the single most important factor is whether "the Jewish question" becomes politicized—that is, whether some political leaders come to believe that there is political capital in attacking Jews. For the moment, the cleavage structure in the Soviet Union pits "liberals" against "conservatives" (using these terms in the very peculiar way they are used in the Soviet Union), with neither side closely connected to Jewish interests. To the extent that this configuration of opposing interests remains constant, Jews seem unlikely to become the targets of political attack. Nonetheless, the future of the Soviet Union is particularly hard to predict. Should an opportunist see profit in anti-Semitism, there is clearly a hard core of likely support, as well as substantial potential among those who are "uncertain" about Jews. Thus, in the final analysis, those who care about Soviet Jewry can take only limited hope from our analysis.

Appendix

The Sample

THE UNIVERSE

The Moscow survey is based on a representative sample of the Moscow Oblast. The oblast is an area of 47,000 square kilometers and includes 39 administrative raions, 69 cities, and 74 urban settlements. The population of the oblast is nearly 16 million, and 79 percent of the oblast is classified as urban. The city of Moscow has a population of roughly 9 million.

THE SAMPLE

The Moscow sample was drawn through a two-stage process. At the first stage, 32 regions of Moscow and 54 populated areas of the Moscow Oblast were selected from all geographical units within the oblast. At the second stage, individual respondents were selected from lists of residents maintained by the central address bureau. A total of 550 respondents were randomly selected from the list.

RESPONDENT SELECTION

The Moscow Oblast respondents were randomly selected from lists of residents maintained by the central address bureau. Using the records of the address bureaus and farm records, specific named respondents were identified. Thus, unlike many Western samples, there was no need to select individual respondents within households using household enumeration methods.

It is important to consider whether the records of the address and farm bureaus constitute a useful sampling frame. Certainly these records are superior to using voting lists, which are derived mainly from the address and farm records themselves. But using these records clearly has some disadvantages, in addition to their many important advantages.

The first question is whether these records provide a reasonably complete enumeration of the population. We believe they probably do. There is a strong incentive for all Soviet people to register with the bureaus. It is the records from these bureaus that are used to issue the internal passports. Not only is it a criminal offense not to register, but this is also the required point of registration for military service. These records have also become quite important recently for purposes of rationing. In addition, these records have the advantage of being updated continuously.

At the same time, however, it is clear that some Soviets do not live where they are thought to live according to the official records. The proportion of people in this category is impossible to judge with any precision but is probably on the order of 10–15 percent in large cities, much less in small cities, and practically nil in villages and rural areas. Thus, it was impossible to locate some of the respondents selected to be interviewed because they did not live where we expected them to live.

RESPONSE RATE

Of the 550 respondents selected, 40 respondents could not be contacted, even after as many as three visits to their homes. In addition, there was a single overt refusal to be interviewed, and one additional questionnaire was rejected because it could not be verified. Four interviews had too much missing data to be usable. Thus, the total number of respondents in the survey is 504. The response rate is therefore 92 percent.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey instrument was constructed primarily in the United States but was pretested in Moscow and was significantly revised by both the American and Soviet research teams working closely together.[16] The survey asked a broad array of questions on many topics. The survey instrument was back-translated (i.e., translated back to English) twice, and every effort was made to insure that the questions, though mainly Western in origin, were tailored to the Soviet cultural context. Special attention was given to training the interviewers in techniques more common in Western survey research. Of course, the respondents had no idea that the survey was in any way connected with an American research project.

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[16] The Moscow instrument was designed in part by Kent L. Tedin and Joseph Sanders.

THE INTERVIEWERS

Interviewers were recruited and trained by staff from the Institute of Sociology (USSR Academy of Sciences). The interviewers were instructed in standard interview techniques. All of the 59 interviewers used in the project completed the questionnaire. Like interviewers in the West, these interviewers were largely female (66 percent). The average age was 24 years old. Reflecting their association with the Academy of Sciences, the interviewers are quite well educated, even though three-fourths report an average monthly income of less than 150 rubles per family member. Only 5 percent of the interviewers are members of the Communist party, while 70 percent are members of a trade union. Thus, the Moscow interviewers are better educated than Western interviewers but in most other respects are similar to their Western colleagues.

Several steps were taken to discourage cheating on the interviews. First, a fairly elaborate system of supervision was put in place. Second, each questionnaire was carefully checked by a supervisor. Third, with just a few exceptions, interviewers were not allowed to conduct a great number of interviews. The average number of interviews conducted per interviewer is 8.5 (minimum = 1 interview [3 interviewers], maximum = 16 interviews [2 interviewers]). Finally, verification of interviews was successful in a small percentage of the cases. No instances of falsification were discovered.

DATA RELIABILITY

As with all surveys, there can be no absolute guarantee of the reliability of all the data collected. All that we can guarantee is that every reasonable step to insure the quality of the data was in fact taken.

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PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT AIDS POLICIES

THE ROLE OF MISINFORMATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARD HOMOSEXUALS

VINCENT PRICE
MEI-LING HSU

Abstract In an effort to better understand the cognitive and attitudinal factors underlying public opinion on AIDS-related issues, this article proposes and empirically tests a model of the relationships between (1) knowledge of HIV transmission, specifically the misinformation that AIDS can be transmitted easily through casual contact with HIV-infected persons; (2) attitudes toward homosexuals, the most prominent of the social groups presently affected by the AIDS crisis; and (3) support for restrictive public policies aimed at HIV-infected persons. Data from two nationally representative surveys conducted in December of 1985 ($N = 2{,}308$) and in July of 1987 ($N = 2{,}095$) provide evidence that misinformation about AIDS transmission and negative attitudes toward homosexuals are strong predictors of support for stringent restrictions of persons with AIDS. The findings also suggest that several background factors, in particular, education and political liberalism, may also play decisive roles in influencing levels of support for restricting those infected with the AIDS virus.

The spread of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) through the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) was first recognized as a pressing public health problem in the early 1980s. Since 1983, survey research in the United States has helped document aggregate trends in AIDS-related knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors,

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:29–52 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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as well as opinion preferences on policies aimed at combating the disease (e.g., Blake and Arkin 1988; Singer 1989; Singer, Rogers, and Corcoran 1987). By and large, this work has suggested that although scientifically demonstrated routes of HIV transmission (through intimate sexual contact, sharing needles, and blood transfusions) are well understood by the public, there is nonetheless a persistent belief among substantial portions of the public that AIDS can also be transmitted through a variety of casual routes (e.g., by working alongside HIV-infected persons, shaking hands, being sneezed on, etc.). Recently, for example, the National Center for Health Statistics estimated from their September 1990 National Health Interview Survey that 24 percent of the public thinks it is "very likely" or "somewhat likely" that someone would contract AIDS from eating in a restaurant where the cook has the AIDS virus, while 19 percent believes it is "very" or "somewhat likely" that they would contract AIDS from using public toilets (Adams and Hardy 1991).

These findings are of concern to public health policy officials for at least two important reasons. First, basic knowledge about HIV and how it is transmitted is an essential precursor to reasonable and safe personal health practices, which are necessary for preventing further spread of AIDS. Second—and more to the point of the present research—levels of public knowledge have considerable consequences for the structuring of public policy health debates and the long-term social outcomes for the AIDS epidemic. Public support or opposition will undoubtedly help determine the eventual success or failure of various health policies. And some research has already found that beliefs in the casual transmission of HIV are indeed predictive of increased levels of public support for certain restrictive and even discriminatory policies aimed at infected persons (Sniderman et al. 1987). Given that public health officials currently desire policies that are not heavily restrictive of HIV-infected persons (e.g., the President's Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic [Watkins 1988]) such findings certainly deserve attention.

Correct information—or misinformation—about the ways in which AIDS is contracted is certainly not the only factor underlying public opinion on AIDS-related issues. Long-standing public attitudes, in particular, attitudes toward the clearly defined social groups that have so far been most affected by AIDS, will also presumably play a large role. Some evidence bearing on this issue has also been uncovered: recent work has suggested that antihomosexual or homophobic attitudes may directly affect public policy preferences (Ostrow and Traugott 1988; Sniderman et al. 1987) and perhaps interfere with receptivity to publicized information about AIDS transmission (Stipp and Kerr 1989).

Previous research, then, although limited, has identified at least two variables that appear to be important predictors of public opinion concerning AIDS-related health policies: levels of misinformation about the transmissibility of AIDS and levels of antigay sentiment. But if these variables are to be dealt with effectively in the formulation of public health policy, and in the planning and implementation of health information campaigns, a better understanding of their origins is needed. What factors, in other words, contribute to AIDS knowledge and to antigay attitudes?

It seems reasonable to postulate that exposure to mass media messages about AIDS is the principal determinant of levels of AIDS knowledge, since the mass media have, to date, been the principal conduits for public information about the disease. The American public, at least, seems to credit the mass media as being a principal source of AIDS information (Singer, Rogers, and Corcoran 1987). Exposure to media messages is not, however, in and of itself sufficient to produce changes in knowledge—and certainly not changes in attitude or opinion. Decades of research on communication and attitude change have demonstrated that media audiences may, due to a variety of psychological factors, selectively attend to messages, distort or alter their meaning, and thus "resist" them (see, e.g., McGuire 1981). Recently Stipp and Kerr (1989) have argued that negative attitudes toward homosexuals can interfere with the acceptance of information from the mass media about AIDS.

Against this backdrop of limited prior research and findings, then, we propose the following set of propositions concerning the determinants of public opinion on AIDS-related policies:

1. The misunderstanding that AIDS can be easily contracted through casual contact with HIV-infected persons is a primary contributor to higher levels of support for more restrictive public policies aimed at people with AIDS.

2. Principal factors contributing to misunderstanding about AIDS transmission include (*a*) limited exposure to mass media messages about AIDS, (*b*) restricted ability to comprehend information that is received, and (*c*) attitudinal resistance to mass media messages due to various long-standing values and predispositions.

3. Consequently, variables that affect exposure and comprehension (e.g., socioeconomic background, age, education) or that may engender resistance to AIDS information (namely, elevated feelings of threat or fear, religious and moral beliefs, and attitudes toward sexual behavior) are thus expected to be principal predictors of misunderstanding.

4. Principal predictors of support for restrictive public policies toward people with AIDS are expected to include—in addition to misun-

derstanding about casual transmission—general attitudes toward individual freedoms and civil rights and political liberalism/conservatism and negative attitudes toward affected groups (e.g., toward homosexuals).

These four propositions are necessarily general, given the somewhat underdeveloped state of research in this area. Although the research literature on public opinion concerning AIDS is steadily expanding, it remains in relatively short supply. Furthermore, studies to date suffer from several important limitations. First, much of the research drawn from nationally representative surveys has been confined to aggregate-level data analysis, most of it descriptive or limited to bivariate cross-tabulations (e.g., Blake and Arkin 1988; Singer, Rogers, and Corcoran 1987). More recent efforts to extend this important work by pursuing multivariate analyses (e.g., Singer 1989) have still relied primarily upon demographic analyses. Meanwhile, more in-depth studies of determinants of knowledge, attitudes, or opinions using multivariate techniques at the individual level of analysis have generally been confined to regional rather than national surveys (e.g., Ostrow and Traugott 1988; Sniderman et al. 1987) or have investigated only a very small subset of variables (e.g., Stipp and Kerr 1989).

Unfortunately, then, we still lack a systematic understanding of even the most basic demographic and attitudinal determinants of public levels of knowledge about AIDS, or the ways in which AIDS knowledge and longer-standing attitudinal and social-structural variables operate together in shaping public opinions on potential AIDS policies. The present research aims at addressing these problems, by taking advantage of two extant survey data sets to pursue systematic, individual-level analyses of these issues. In line with the propositions outlined above, we propose and test a theoretical model of the relationships between a variety of social-structural background variables, knowledge of HIV transmission, attitudes toward homosexuals, and support for restrictive policies aimed at HIV-infected persons.

Method

Data used in the present study were taken from two *Los Angeles Times* polls, conducted in December 1985 and July 1987, which focused on AIDS. Both surveys involved telephone interviews with national samples of men and women age 18 and older (N = 2,308 in 1985; N = 2,095 in 1987). Responses were weighted to take account of household size, times at home, and variations in the sample relating to geographic region, age, gender, employment, race, and education. Telephone numbers for the samples were generated by computer randomly within strata to insure that both listed and unlisted households were included.[1] Five standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs), which together account for nearly half of the AIDS cases in the United States, were oversampled (Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Miami, and Newark, NJ). Data from the national sample and the oversampled SMSAs were weighted in the analyses according to the probability of selection.

MEASURES

Knowledge of AIDS transmission. The present study focuses on misinformation about the transmissibility of AIDS rather than correct information about ways in which AIDS can be contracted. By 1985, when the first of the two *Los Angeles Times* polls was conducted, well over 90 percent of the general population already understood that AIDS could be transmitted through intimate sexual contact, the sharing of hypodermic needles, and blood transfusions. But the incorrect impression that AIDS can also be transmitted through a variety of far more casual forms of contact with infected persons clearly persisted.

Four questions included in the 1985 survey were used to assess respondents' levels of misinformation concerning AIDS transmission: people were asked whether they thought someone could contract AIDS in four different ways: (1) from eating food that had been handled by a person with AIDS (19 percent replied "yes"); (2) from a toilet seat (24 percent "yes"); (3) from trying on clothes in a department store (14 percent "yes"); and (4) from handling money (10 percent "yes"). The four questions were recoded to take the values 0 = no, and 1 = yes or not sure. The exact wording of each question, including item means and standard deviations, are presented in table A1.

Only two of these questions were repeated on the 1987 survey (see table A2). In the 2 years intervening between the surveys, levels of misinformation about the transmissibility of AIDS declined only slightly. A sizable number of respondents still believed that AIDS could be contracted through food (14 percent indicated they thought so) or from a toilet seat (20 percent said "yes").

Attitudes toward homosexuals. Four questions included in the 1985 survey were used to measure attitudes toward homosexuals. These questions asked respondents (1) whether they thought that homosexuals have too little or too much political power (8 percent said "too little,'' 39 percent said ''about right,'' and 34 percent said ''too much''); (2) whether their views about homosexuality were liberal or conservative (29 percent were ''very'' or ''somewhat'' liberal toward homosexuality, 44 percent were ''very'' or ''somewhat'' conservative); (3) to what degree they considered sexual relations between adults of the same sex to be wrong (73 percent felt that it was ''always'' or ''almost always'' wrong); and (4) what their personal attitude was toward homosexuality (50 percent were personally opposed to homosexual relations). Responses to all four questions were recoded such that 1 = the response most supportive of homosexuals and 5 = the least supportive response. Again, the exact wording of each question and descriptive statistics are provided in table A1.

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[1] Response rates were 76 percent for the 1987 survey (*Los Angeles Times*, poll no. 126) and 65 percent for the 1985 survey (poll no. 101).

Only two of these four questions were repeated in the 1987 survey, and responses to these questions were overall quite similar to the data from the earlier survey. When asked their overall views of homosexuality, 23 percent said they were ''very'' or ''somewhat'' liberal, while 42 percent said they were ''very'' or ''somewhat'' conservative. On the matter of gay political power, 13 percent of 1987 respondents felt that homosexuals had ''too little'' power, 32 percent said that gay political clout was ''about right,'' and 34 percent indicated that homosexuals had ''too much'' political power. Once again the items were recoded to a 1–5 interval (see table A2).

Opinions concerning restriction of HIV-infected people. The 1985 survey also carried three questions that assessed the level of support for policies aimed at restricting people infected with AIDS as a means of combating the disease. These restrictions included: (1) requiring persons exposed to AIDS to carry identification (ID) cards (48 percent in favor, 43 percent opposed, 9 percent not sure); (2) quarantining AIDS patients (51 percent in favor, 40 percent opposed, 9 percent not sure); and even (3) tattooing people exposed to AIDS (15 percent in favor, 78 percent opposed, 6 percent not sure). The three items were coded with values 1 = opposed, 2 = not sure, and 3 = in favor (wording and descriptive statistics for each item can be found in table A1).

It is surprising that such a sizable minority within the general population—here estimated at about 15 percent—would support a measure as extreme as tattooing persons with AIDS. Yet support for such restrictions, as with the aforementioned persistence of AIDS misinformation and antigay sentiment, apparently remained constant or increased slightly from 1985 to 1987. The two restriction measures repeated in 1987 produced a pattern of response similar to that found 2 years earlier. On the matter of quarantining AIDS patients, 52 percent favored such a measure, while 41 percent opposed it and 7 percent were unsure. Those in support of tattooing AIDS patients amounted to 29 percent of respondents, with 64 percent opposed and 6 percent unsure. These two questions were coded in the same manner as those from the 1985 survey (see table A2).

Antecedent variables. Although direct measures of exposure or attention to AIDS information in the mass media were not readily available, the 1985 survey did include four relevant background variables that were expected to be correlated with exposure to media messages about AIDS or with the ability to comprehend such messages, or that were thought to be potentially correlated with attitudinal resistance to AIDS information. Recent research on learning from the news (e.g., Price and Zaller 1990; Robinson and Levy 1986) has established that social-structural variables—and in particular, education—are in fact stronger predictors of news reception than are self-report measures of media exposure or attention to public affairs. Because research has found that older, better-educated, and upper-class respondents are more likely to receive public affairs information from the media (Robinson and Levy 1986), our analyses included three variables as predictors of information about AIDS: respondents' education (measured on a 9-point scale from "some grade school or less" to "graduate degree" and recoded to correspond to years; $M = 12.34$, S.D. = 2.82, $N = 2{,}228$); respondents' age ($M = 42.80$, S.D. = 17.46, $N = 2{,}187$); and household income (measured on a scale from 1 = under $10,000 to 7 = over $60,000; $M = 3.43$, S.D. = 1.66, $N = 1{,}859$).

Both education and age have been found in prior research to be predictive of antigay sentiments as well, such that older and less educated people tend to view homosexuals more negatively than others (e.g., Irwin and Thompson 1977; West 1977). There are also suggestions in the literature that political ideology is related to attitudes toward homosexuals (e.g., Bierly 1985; Rudolph 1989), with liberals and Democrats expressing more tolerant attitudes. For these reasons our analysis included three predictors of antigay attitudes: education, age, and political liberalism. The latter was assessed by the question: "How would you describe your views on most matters having to do with politics? Do you generally think of yourself as being very liberal, or somewhat liberal, or middle-of-the-road, or somewhat conservative, or very conservative—or don't you pay all that much attention to politics?" Responses were ordered along a continuum from 1 = very conservative to 5 = very liberal, with "don't pay attention" responses coded at the midpoint ($M = 2.89$, S.D. = .97, $N = 1{,}954$). All of the same background measures were also included in the 1987 survey. Item statistics for each were again quite similar to those from the earlier poll (years of education: $M = 12.52$, S.D. = 2.66, $N = 2{,}077$;

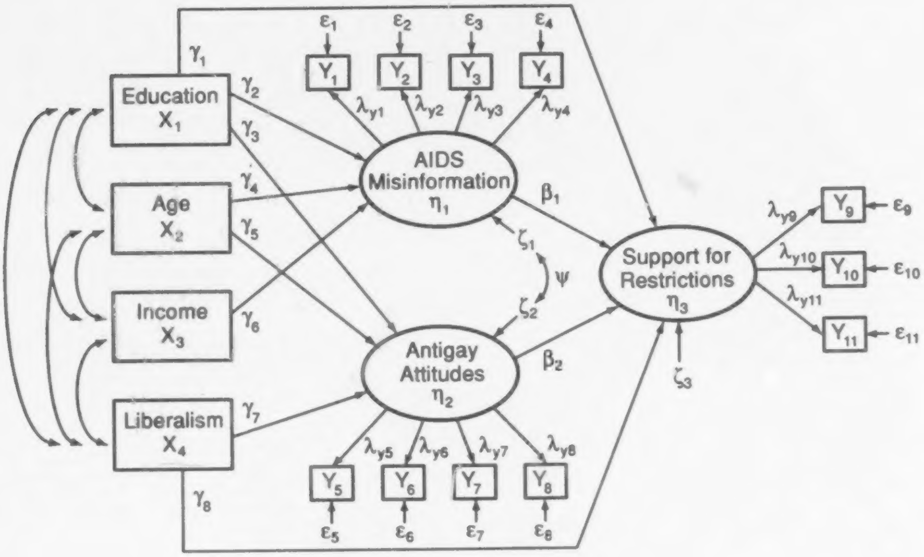
Education
X1
Age
X2
Income
X3
Liberalism
X4
γ1
γ2
γ3
γ4
γ5
γ6
γ7
γ8
ε1
ε2
ε3
ε4
Y1
Y2
Y3
Y4
λy1
λy2
λy3
λy4
AIDS
Misinformation
η1
ζ1
ψ
ζ2
Antigay
Attitudes
η2
λy5
λy6
λy7
λy8
Y5
Y6
Y7
Y8
ε5
ε6
ε7
ε8
β1
β2
Support for
Restrictions
η3
ζ3
λy9
λy10
λy11
Y9
Y10
Y11
ε9
ε10
ε11

Figure 1. Theoretical model

age: M = 43.18, S.D. = 17.98, N = 2,062; income: M = 3.77, S.D. = 1.87, N = 1,969; and political liberalism: M = 2.852, S.D. = .91, N = 2,027).

THEORETICAL MODEL TO BE TESTED

Because multiple measures were available for several of the constructs of interest—AIDS misinformation, antigay attitudes, and support for restricting people with AIDS—the hypothesized theoretical relationships linking each of the above measures were examined using latent variable structural equation methods. The set of postulated relationships, derived from the general expectations outlined above, is depicted in figure 1. In the figure, each survey question (or "observed" variable) is depicted as a rectangle, while "latent" constructs (or "unobserved" variables) are depicted as ovals. As illustrated, each of the four background variables—education (X_1), age (X_2), income (X_3), and political liberalism (X_4)—are exogenous to the model. The three endogenous variables (all of which are latent constructs) include two that are intervening—AIDS misinformation (η_1) and antigay attitudes (η_2)—while support for restrictions (η_3) is the dependent variable.

We rely upon single measures for each of the four exogenous variables (X_1 through X_4). However, as described earlier, we have multiple survey questions to assess each of the intervening variables and the dependent variable. Thus AIDS misinformation (η_1) is modeled as a latent construct indicated by four observed variables: questions about whether AIDS can be transmitted by toilet seats (Y_1), handling food (Y_2), trying on clothes (Y_3), or by handling money (Y_4). Similarly, antigay attitudes variable (η_2) is modeled as a latent construct indicated by four attitude questions: whether gays have too much power (Y_5), how conservative toward gays the respondent feels (Y_6), whether gay sex is thought to be wrong (Y_7), and the respondent's overall reported negativity toward gays (Y_8). Finally, support for restrictions (η_3) has three indicators: whether the respondent favors an AIDS quarantine (Y_9), tattoos for HIV-infected people (Y_{10}), or identification cards (Y_{11}). Thus the model illustrated in figure 1 includes a set of factor-analytic equations linking each of the observed Y variables (the survey questions described above) to their respective latent constructs. The λ_Y parameters shown refer to the factor loadings for each observed variable on its latent construct, and the ϵ parameters refer to the residual variances, or errors in measurement, for the observed indicators. The inclusion of this factor-analytic model allows us to estimate structural path coefficients for relationships among the latent constructs themselves, that is, estimates for path coefficients that are disattenuated for unreliability in the individual measures.

The parameters γ_2, γ_4, and γ_6 in figure 1 assess the hypothesized structural paths from education, age, and income, respectively, to AIDS misinformation, while γ_3, γ_5, and γ_7 assess the hypothesized paths from education, age, and liberalism to antigay attitudes. In turn, AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes are expected to influence support for restricting AIDS patients, as depicted in figure 1 by parameters β_1 and β_2. The model thus hypothesizes two general "routes" leading to support for restricting people with AIDS: a cognitive path operating through knowledge of HIV transmission and an attitudinal route flowing, as it were, through antigay sentiment. Due to the likelihood that not all of the influence of education and political liberalism on support for restrictions operates indirectly via misinformation and antigay attitudes, the model also includes direct paths to support for restrictions from each of these variables (parameters γ_1 and γ_8).

The ζ parameters refer to the residual variances, or errors in prediction, for each of the three endogenous η constructs. As indicated, the residual variance in AIDS misinformation (ζ_1) and the residual variance in antigay attitudes (ζ_2) are expected to be correlated due to the likelihood that they share several mutual causes not included in our model. This correlation (ψ), we expect, will be positive.

The same theoretical model illustrated in figure 1 was tested using both the 1985 and 1987 survey data. In the calculating model estimates for 1987, however, only two measures were available for use as indicators of each endogenous latent variable (see questions in table A2).

1985 Survey Results

The model illustrated in figure 1 was estimated using LISREL 7, a computer program that estimates the parameters in structural equation models (Jöreskog and Sörbom 1989). The LISREL program generates these estimates by minimizing the difference between sample covariances (i.e., the inter-item covariances, calculated from the sample, among the full set of observed variables described above) and the covariances that are predicted by the hypothesized model. Because most of the variables under study here are ordinal measures, a matrix of inter-item polychoric and polyserial correlations rather than Pearson correlations or covariances was used in the analysis, and a weighted least-squares (WLS) method of estimation was employed.[2] Computation of the correlation matrix was carried out using a listwise deletion of missing cases, resulting in 1,706 valid observations.[3]

GOODNESS OF FIT

Before discussing the obtained weighted least-squares estimates for the model parameters, we should first consider the overall fit of the model to the data. Several summary measures, which assess in various ways the fit between the inter-item correlations observed in the sample and those predicted by the model, are presented in table 1. The obtained χ^2 statistic for the model (here used as a "badness-of-fit" rather than a goodness-of-fit measure) is clearly significant ($p < .01$). Nevertheless, other considerations suggest that the model fits the data reasonably well. Previous results with structural equation modeling have indicated that the χ^2 statistic can be large and significant even with good fits, particularly when the covariance matrix under analysis is based upon a very large number of observations (Carmines and McIver 1981; Hayduk 1987; Jöreskog and Sörbom 1989). Table 1 thus provides the goodness-of-fit index (GFI = .99), which theoretically ranges from 0 to 1 and indicates the relative amount of variance and covariance explained by a model. A modified version of this index (AGFI = .98) adjusts the goodness-of-fit measure by taking into account the degrees of freedom in the model. A third approach to determining goodness of

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[2] In computing the matrix, all variables were treated as ordinal except age, which is continuous.

[3] Listwise deletion of missing values produces a correlation matrix with several desirable properties (Bollen 1989), but it does in this instance eliminate a substantial number of cases. Thus, for comparative purposes, matrices computed using pairwise deletion and mean substitution were also analyzed. Parameter estimates and measures of fit were very nearly identical across the three sets of results.

Table 1. Overall Goodness-of-Fit Estimates (1985 Survey)

Summary Measures	Values
χ^2 (with 77 *df*)	393.24
Probability (p)	$< .01$
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	.99
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	.98
Bentler and Bonett (Δ_1)	.97
Bollen (Δ_2)	.97
Bollen (ρ_1)	.96
Tucker and Lewis (ρ_2)	.97
Root mean square residual (RMSR)	.06
Coefficient of determination for Y variables (CD_Y)	.99
Total coefficient of determination for structural equations (TCD)	.49

SOURCES.—GFI and AGFI are proposed as goodness-of-fit measures by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1989). Other goodness-of-fit measures are taken from Bentler and Bonett (1980), Bollen (1989), and Tucker and Lewis (1973).

Table 2. Standardized WLS Estimates for Measurement Components (1985 Survey)

Latent Constructs/Observed Measures	Factor Loading (λ_Y)	Measurement Error (ϵ)
η_1, misinformation about transmission:		
Y_1 transmission: toilet	(.80)	.36*
Y_2 transmission: food	.94*	.12*
Y_3 transmission: clothes	.63*	.61*
Y_4 transmission: money	.90*	.18*
η_2, negative attitudes toward gays:		
Y_5 gays: too much power	(.62)	.62*
Y_6 gays: conservative toward	.76*	.43*
Y_7 gays: gay sex is wrong	.88*	.22*
Y_8 gays: negative toward	.79*	.38*
η_3, support for restricting people with AIDS:		
Y_9 restrictions: quarantine	(.71)	.50*
Y_{10} restrictions: tattoo	.64*	.59*
Y_{11} restrictions: ID cards	.74*	.45*

NOTE.—Factor loadings in parentheses were fixed at a value of 1.00 prior to standardizing to establish the unit of measurement for each latent construct.

* $p < .01$.

fit is to contrast the model's χ^2 value to that obtained by a general null or baseline "no-factor" model. The Δ and ρ measures listed in table 1 are of this variety. Bentler and Bonett (1980) and Bollen (1989) suggest that models producing values of such "incremental fit" indices below .90 can usually be improved substantially. As illustrated by table 1, the obtained indices are all well above this value. A fourth rough indicator of model fit is the root mean square residual (RMSR = .06), which represents the average deviation between the observed sample correlations and those predicted by the postulated model. Two final summary measures are also presented. The coefficient of determination for the *Y* variables ($CD_Y = .99$) indicates how well the *Y* variables serve as joint indicators of the η constructs, while the total coefficient of determination (TCD = .49) assesses how well the structural equations account for the η constructs.

Taken together, then, these results suggest that the model fits the data reasonably well. Estimates for the measurement model, including factor loadings and error variances for the indicators of each latent construct, can be found in table 2. As shown, the loadings for all indicators on their respective latent constructs are substantial.

STRUCTURAL PATH ESTIMATES

Standardized weighted least-squares estimates of the structural parameters of the model are displayed in figure 2. The residual variances for each of the endogenous η constructs (i.e., the percentages of variance in these constructs left "unexplained" by the structural equations) indicate that the model does succeed in accounting for sizable proportions of variance. The estimated model explains 13 percent of the variance in AIDS misinformation, 33 percent of the variance in antigay attitudes, and half (51 percent) of the variance in support for restricting persons with AIDS. As expected, the residual variances in AIDS misinformation and in antigay attitudes are positively correlated ($\psi = .28$), suggesting that they do share mutual causes not included in the model.

Most worthy of note are the substantial and significant coefficients for the structural paths from AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes to support for restrictions ($\beta_1 = .36$, $\beta_2 = .32$). Just as striking is the estimated influence of education, which is linked to lower levels of support for restrictions not only through strong intermediate effects on levels of AIDS misinformation ($\gamma_2 = -.27$) and antigay sentiment ($\gamma_3 = -.25$), but also through a direct structural path ($\gamma_1 = -.29$) as well. The estimated total effects of education on support for restrictions are thus rather large ($\gamma_1 + \gamma_2\beta_1 + \gamma_3\beta_2 = -.46$). The negative relationship between political liberalism and support for restrictions, on the other hand, appears to be mediated almost exclusively via inter-

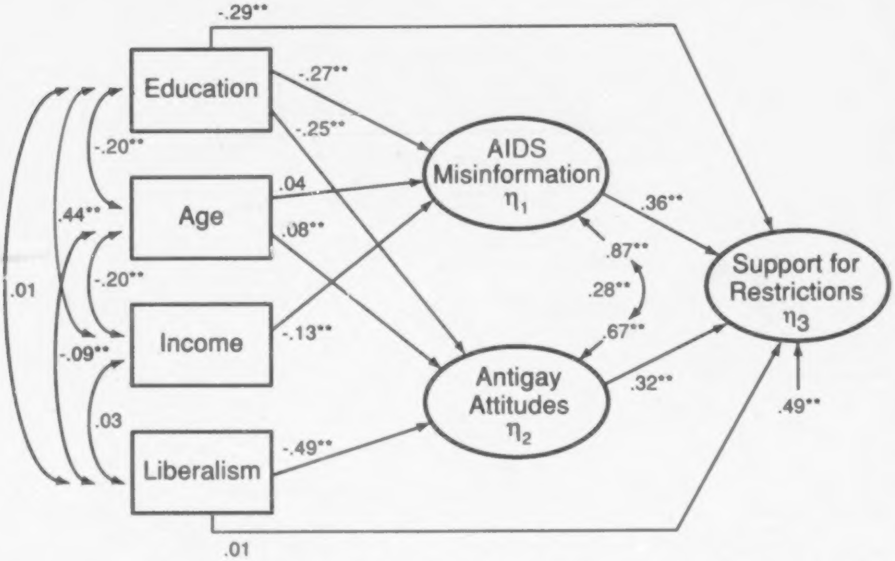
-.29**
Education
-.27**
-.25**
-.20**
.44**
Age
.04
.08**
AIDS Misinformation η_1
.36**
.87**
.28**
.67**
Support for Restrictions η_3
.01
-.20**
Income
-.13**
-.09**
Antigay Attitudes η_2
.32**
.49**
.03
Liberalism
-.49**
.01

Figure 2. Standardized WLS estimates for structural equations (1985 survey); $^{**}p < .01$.

mediate influence on antigay sentiment ($\gamma_7 = -.49$). The expected negative direct path from liberalism to support for restricting AIDS patients is not obtained, and consequently the estimated total effects of liberalism are smaller ($\gamma_8 + \gamma_7\beta_2 = -.15$).

Finally, estimates of the parameters for the structural paths from age to AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes—as with the coefficient for the path linking income to AIDS misinformation—are in the expected directions, although they are each modest or small in size.

1987 Survey Results

The same theoretical model was also tested using data from the 1987 survey, based upon a matrix of polychoric and polyserial correlations for the subset of variables available (as described for the 1985 results above). Computation of the matrix was again carried out using a listwise deletion of missing cases, resulting in 1,830 valid observations.

GOODNESS OF FIT

Indices of overall fit for the model, which are shown in table 3, once again indicate that the model fits the data rather well. In fact the fit is actually somewhat better than was the case for the 1985 data. Although the obtained χ^2 statistic is again clearly significant, the goodness-of-fit

Table 3. Overall Goodness-of-Fit Estimates (1987 Survey)

Summary Measures	Values
χ^2 (with 22 *df*)	73.09
Probability (p)	$< .01$
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	.99
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	.99
Bentler and Bonett (Δ_1)	.98
Bollen (Δ_2)	.99
Bollen (ρ_1)	.96
Tucker and Lewis (ρ_2)	.97
Root mean square residual (RMSR)	.04
Coefficient of determination for Y variables (CD_Y)	.98
Total coefficient of determination for structural equations (TCD)	.44

Sources.—GFI and AGFI are proposed as goodness-of-fit measures by Jöreskog and Sörbom (1989). Other goodness-of-fit measures are taken from Bentler and Bonett (1980), Bollen (1989), and Tucker and Lewis (1973).

indices are all quite high (close to 1.0), and the root mean square residual is small (.04). Estimates for the measurement model, including factor loadings and error variances for the indicators of each latent construct, can be found in table 4. As was true for the 1985 data, the loadings for each indicator are again substantial.

STRUCTURAL PATH ESTIMATES

Standardized weighted least-squares estimates of the model parameters are displayed in figure 3. As indicated by the estimated residuals of the structural equations, the model accounts for proportions of variance in the three η constructs that are comparable to the proportions explained in the 1985 results: 19 percent of the variance in AIDS misinformation, 31 percent of the variance in antigay attitudes, and 48 percent of the variance in support for restricting persons with AIDS. As expected, the residual variances in AIDS misinformation and in antigay attitudes are again positively correlated ($\psi = .31$).

Indeed, what is most striking about the estimates presented in figure 3 is the degree to which they replicate the results from the initial 1985 analysis. Again we find large and significant coefficients for the structural paths from AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes to support for restrictions ($\beta_1 = .42$, $\beta_2 = .34$). Education is again linked negatively to support for restrictions via strong indirect negative effects on levels of AIDS misinformation ($\gamma_2 = -.37$) and antigay senti-

Table 4. Standardized WLS Estimates for Measurement Components (1987 Survey)

Latent Constructs/Observed Measures	Factor Loading (λ_Y)	Measurement Error (ϵ)
η_1, misinformation about AIDS transmission:		
Y_1 transmission: toilet	(.91)	.17*
Y_2 transmission: food	.75*	.44*
η_2, negative attitudes toward homosexuals:		
Y_5 gays: too much power	(.57)	.68*
Y_6 gays: conservative toward	.79*	.38*
η_3, support for restricting people with AIDS:		
Y_9 restrictions: quarantine	(.76)	.42*
Y_{10} restrictions: tattoo	.59*	.66*

NOTE.—Factor loadings in parentheses were fixed at a value of 1.00 prior to standardizing to establish the unit of measurement for each latent construct.
* $p < .01$.

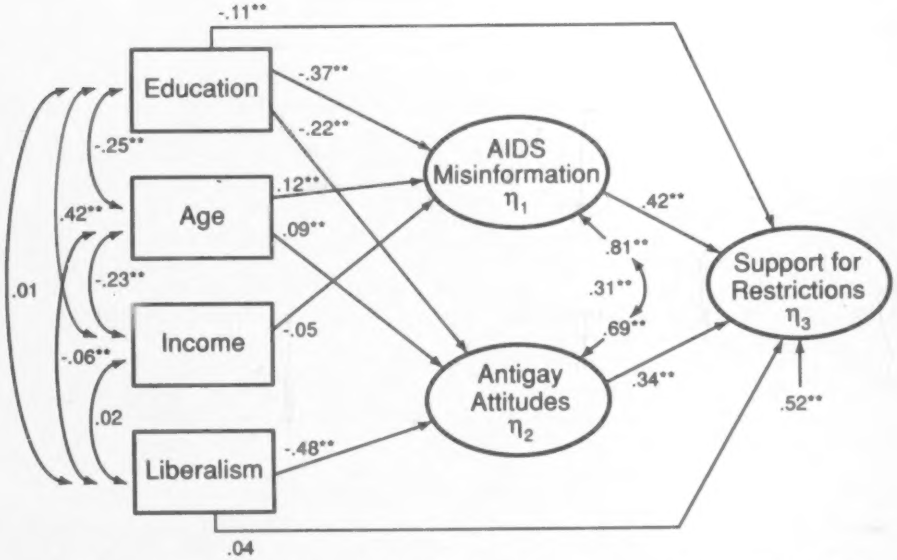
-.11**
Education
-.37**
-.22**
-.25**
Age
.12**
.09**
.42**
AIDS
Misinformation
η1
.42**
.81**
.31**
.69**
Support for
Restrictions
η3
-.23**
.01
Income
-.05
-.06**
Antigay
Attitudes
η2
.34**
.52**
.02
Liberalism
-.48**
.04

Figure 3. Standardized WLS estimates for structural equations (1987 survey); $**p < .01$.

ment ($\gamma_3 = -.22$).[4] A strong negative relationship between political liberalism and support for restrictions is again operative via an intermediate impact on antigay sentiment ($\gamma_7 = -.48$).[5]

One point of divergence between findings from 1987 and 1985, however, lies in the conflicting estimates for the parameter assessing the direct structural path from education to support for restricting AIDS patients. While both estimates are negative and significant, the coefficient calculated from the 1987 data is less than half as large as that previously obtained ($\gamma_1 = -.11$, compared with $-.29$ in 1985). In fact, additional analyses of the 1987 data indicated that an alternative structural model without any direct paths from education or liberalism to support for restrictions—in other words, a model that forces all the impact of the background variables on policy opinions to operate indirectly via intermediate effects on AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes—would fit the data just as well. Such was not the case with the 1985 results, however, which indicated that the model including direct paths (as presented) fit the data significantly better.[6]

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[4] The research findings of Sniderman et al. (1987) suggest that education may interact with other variables (particularly antigay attitudes) in affecting opinion on AIDS-related issues, thereby producing different path models for high- and low-education respondents. To test this possibility, we conducted group comparisons employing covariance matrices calculated separately for respondents with a high school education or less (1985 survey, $N = 985$) and for those respondents with a higher education (1985 survey, $N = 721$). Using maximum likelihood (ML) methods, we first estimated a baseline model that stipulated the same measurement and structural components across the two groups, but which allowed all parameters estimates to vary between groups (X^2 with 154 $df = 661.07$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{\mathrm{LO}} = .95$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{\mathrm{HI}} = .96$). We then estimated a second, more restrictive model constraining all structural parameters (i.e., all γ and β coefficients) to be equal across the high and low education groups. The second model fit the data just as well (X^2 with 164 $df = 671.11$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{\mathrm{LO}} = .95$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{\mathrm{HI}} = .96$), and the difference χ^2—an omnibus test for the equality of the structural path coefficients across the two groups—was not significant (ΔX^2 with 10 $df = 10.04$, $p < .30$). Results from these stratified models, then, do not support the hypothesis that substantially different path models are obtained from high- and low-education respondents.

[5] Because the model estimates at the two time periods were generally so similar, we conducted group comparisons to test the equivalency of structural path coefficients across two time periods. Using covariance matrices and ML methods, we estimated a baseline model stipulating the same measurement and structural components across the two groups but allowing parameters estimates to vary between groups (X^2 with 44 $df = 279.13$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{85} = .98$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{87} = .99$). A second, more restrictive model constraining all structural parameters (i.e., all γ and β coefficients) to be equal across the earlier and later surveys fit the data very nearly as well (X^2 with 54 $df = 317.55$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{85} = .98$; $\mathrm{GFI}_{87} = .99$). However, an omnibus test for the equality of the structural path coefficients across the two time periods indicated that at least some of the structural path coefficients differed significantly (ΔX^2 with 10 $df = 38.42$, $p < .01$). An inspection of LISREL modification indices and subsequent model evaluations suggested that differences in the coefficients for the paths between education and support for restrictions (γ_1) and between age and AIDS misinformation (γ_3) were primarily responsible for rejection of the omnibus equivalency hypothesis.

[6] It may indeed be that the phenomena being studied changed over time (see n. 5

Discussion

The research reported here provides convincing evidence that misinformation about AIDS transmission and negative attitudes toward homosexuals are strong predictors of support for stringent restrictions of HIV-infected persons. The basic theoretical model that was tested proved an adequate fit to the data for both national surveys investigated, and accounted for a very substantial proportion of variance in support for restricting people with AIDS. There are, however, several important considerations to keep in mind while interpreting the present findings.

CAUSAL INFERENCES AND STRUCTURAL MODELS

First, we should not assume that particular causal relationships have been demonstrated because a given path model fits observational data well. As Bollen (1989) argues, causation cannot be proven with any statistical procedure. The purpose of structural modeling is instead to determine if a set of theoretical relationships, which may be causal in nature, is consistent with the data. In the present case, our results suggest that the proposed model is tenable. But other models, with different assumptions, may also fit the data well.

Furthermore, the magnitude and significance, even the direction, of parameters estimates from structural equation models can vary depending upon model specifications. In this fundamental respect, latent variable structural equation modeling is no different from other, more standard statistical techniques such as ordinary least-squares regression: alternative model specifications can affect one's results. We have provided here, we believe, a theoretically and empirically plausible model of the factors underlying support for restrictive AIDS policies. But we are clearly limited in this analysis by the measures available in our data set; including different variables might have produced different findings.

TESTING ALTERNATIVE MODELS

Although we can only speculate about the ways in which absent variables might affect our results, we can nonetheless assess the degree to which our findings would change if the postulated relationships among the current set of variables were altered (i.e., if the model were

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above). It seems well worth noting, at any rate, that parameter estimates generated by the alternative model for 1987, which included no direct paths from education or liberalism to support for restrictions, deviated only slightly from those presented here.

respecified in different ways). In an effort to gauge the robustness of our results, then, we estimated several alternative models using WLS methods. These supplementary analyses indicated that the parameter estimates for our model were generally quite robust, even though other good-fitting models were possible.

One reasonable comparison model, for example, might include all possible γ paths (i.e., structural paths linking every exogenous X variable to every endogenous η construct). The overall fit indices for this "all paths" model were in fact better than those obtained for the more parsimonious model presented in figures 1–3 (for 1985, X^2 with 73 *df* = 280.22, GFI = .99, AGFI = .98; for 1987, X^2 with 18 *df* = 43.38, GFI = .99, AGFI = .99). However, the coefficients for the paths estimated from our original model deviated only slightly from those estimated in this alternative model (although some were, as might be expected, slightly attenuated). Moreover, few of the additional path coefficients in this comparison model were sizable or significant. The notable exceptions were two: estimates for the direct path from age to support for restrictions were statistically significant in both surveys (the standardized path coefficient was −.09 in 1985 and −.12 in 1987), as were those for the path from liberalism to AIDS misinformation (the standardized coefficient was −.20 in 1985 and −.10 in 1987). The latter paths, indicating that liberals were better informed than conservatives even after controlling for age, income, and education, was not originally anticipated. However, it is generally consistent with the view of Stipp and Kerr (1989), who suggest that background attitudes may play a role not only in the formation of policy opinions, but also in the reception of AIDS information.

There may also be some direct causal connections between attitudes toward homosexuals and misinformation about AIDS that are not incorporated into the model proposed and tested here. Stipp and Kerr (1989) suggest that antigay attitudes actually cause exaggerated beliefs about the easy transmission of AIDS and prevent accurate information from being accepted.[7] It also seems plausible to think of the direction of causality running in the opposite direction (from misinformation to antigay attitudes), to entertain notions of mutual causation, or to posit that these variables are both to some extent functions of other variables (such as a heightened sense of personal threat from AIDS). We did estimate alternative models including paths linking these constructs, but lack of data resources precluded rigorous testing of these various causal hypotheses.[8] These matters remain, then, fertile ground for additional research.

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[7] Stipp and Kerr (1989) cite an interaction between antigay attitudes and education in the prediction of AIDS misinformation. They find that education is a strong predictor of AIDS misinformation, but only for those members of the public who are not antigay. Their data, however, are problematic in that the measure of AIDS misinformation employed was based on questions that dealt with actions that might be taken toward HIV-infected persons and that were, the authors admit, "originally phrased as an attitude item but which seemed to be suitable as a substitute measure of beliefs about AIDS transmission" (p. 99). Our data, like those reported by Stipp and Kerr, evidence a strong relationship between antihomosexual attitudes and AIDS misinformation. But when we attempted to replicate their findings using OLS regression (as they had), we found no interaction between antigay attitudes and education in the prediction of beliefs about AIDS—nor, in fact, in the prediction of support for restricting people with AIDS.

THE NATURE OF THE DEPENDENT MEASURES

Finally, it is important to bear in mind the fact that our primary dependent variable—support for restricting persons with AIDS—was assessed via a set of questions that dealt with some rather severe policies (e.g., issuing ID cards and tattooing HIV-infected people). Thus we would naturally expect stronger associations between levels of support for these kinds of potential actions and negative attitudes toward homosexuals than we would expect, say, between support for government spending or for certain kinds of testing policies and antigay attitudes. Findings from at least one major regional survey, however, have suggested that attitudes toward homosexuals play a key role in predicting opinions in these other domains of public health policy as well (Ostrow and Traugott 1988).

SOME IMPLICATIONS

Despite these limitations, there are several important implications of the findings that deserve highlighting. First, it is well worth noting that AIDS misinformation and negative attitudes toward homosexuals, while they are clearly correlated, appear to function as independent predictors of policy preferences. This finding is important because it suggests that efforts to build consensus for AIDS-related policies should be concerned both with potential cognitive obstacles (i.e., a lack of proper public understanding) and with attitudinal obstacles (i.e., a lack of positive sentiment toward subpopulations affected most by AIDS).

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[8] While it *is* possible to estimate models from our data with paths linking AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes, interpretation of the findings becomes clouded due to the absence of any strong theoretical imperatives and the fact that there are many equivalent models fitting the data equally well. Equivalent models have the same number of parameters, the same fitted residuals, and the same measures of overall model fit (Steltz 1986). For example, one could alter the model in fig. 1 by adding a path from antigay attitudes to AIDS misinformation. Alternatively, one could add a path from liberalism to AIDS misinformation. The models are substantively rather different, but they involve the same number of parameters and fit the data identically. Despite these ambiguities, we did estimate various models with paths linking AIDS misinformation and antigay attitudes. Such models produced significant and positive coefficients for paths in both directions, with coefficients for the path from AIDS misinformation to antigay attitudes being somewhat larger (around .25 in each survey) than those for the path running in the opposite direction (around .15 in each survey). Overall measures of fit for such models were very similar to those obtained for the models presented in figs. 2 and 3. We hesitate, on the basis of these results, to draw any conclusions about likely causal connections between these two constructs. They are clearly related, but the precise nature of this relationship is unclear.

Second, education emerges as an unquestionably important predictor of levels of support for restricting people with AIDS. Respondents' education was linked strongly with both of the key intervening cognitive and attitudinal factors examined here. Not only that, but the findings suggest that education may even explain a reasonable amount of variance in support for restrictive policies independent of that mediated by AIDS misinformation or by negative attitudes toward homosexuals. Precisely why this is so is a question deserving of further analysis. At any rate, the fact that those most likely to support severe restrictions of HIV-infected people are lowest in educational attainment (and thus perhaps those most difficult to "win over" in health campaigns or in efforts to build consensus for public health policy) is also well worth noting.

Above all, the analyses reported here testify to the utility of carefully examining the underpinnings of the public's understanding of the AIDS crisis. Perhaps the accumulation of findings such as these, many of them generated from the analysis of extant survey data, will eventually provide health care policy planners, professional mass communicators, and designers of behavioral and attitudinal interventions with the information they need to succeed in the fight against AIDS.

Appendix

Table A1. Question Wordings, Means, and Standard Deviations (1985 Survey)

Question Wording	Mean	S.D.	*N*
η_1, misinformation about AIDS transmission:			
Y_1 "In your opinion, can someone catch AIDS from a toilet seat?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.368	482	2,308
Y_2 "In your opinion, can people catch AIDS from eating food which has been handled by someone who has AIDS?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.345	.475	2,298
Y_3 "In your opinion, can someone catch AIDS from trying on clothes in a department store?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.244	.430	2,304
Y_4 "In your opinion, can someone catch AIDS from handling money?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.207	.405	2,301
η_2, negative attitudes toward homosexuals:			
Y_5 "How do you feel about the political activity of homosexuals—that is, both gays and lesbians? Do you think that homosexuals have too little political power, or about the right amount, or do you think that homosexuals have too much political power?" (1 = too little; 3 = about the right amount, not sure; 5 = too much)	3.521	1.182	2,281
Y_6 "How would you describe your views about homosexuality? Do you generally think of yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative about homosexuality?" (1 = very liberal; 2 = somewhat liberal; 3 = middle-of-the-road, not sure; 4 = somewhat conservative; 5 = very conservative)	3.341	1.391	2,269

Table AI (*Continued*)

Question Wording	Mean	S.D.	*N*
Y_7 "What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex? Do you think it is always wrong, or almost always wrong, or wrong only sometimes, or not at·all wrong?" (1 = not at all wrong; 2 = not sure; 3 = wrong only sometimes; 4 = almost always wrong; 5 = always wrong)	4.063	1.510	2,288
Y_8 "What is your attitude toward homosexuality? Do you personally approve of homosexual relations between consenting adults . . . or do you think it's alright for other people but not for yourself . . . or do you oppose it for everyone?" (1 = approve; 3 = ok for others, not sure; 5 = oppose)	2.031	.855	2,285
η_3, support for restricting people with AIDS—"Which of the following measures would you favor in order to control the spread of AIDS?":			
Y_9 "Would you favor or oppose adding AIDS to the list of diseases that must be quarantined?" (1 = oppose; 2 = not sure; 3 = favor)	2.112	.946	2,297
Y_{10} "Would you favor or oppose a tattoo for persons who test positive to the AID virus?" (1 = oppose; 2 = not sure; 3 = favor)	1.356	.726	2,278
Y_{11} "Would you favor or oppose identification cards for people who test positive to the AIDS virus?" (1 = oppose; 2 = not sure; 3 = favor)	2.056	.952	2,301

Table A2. Question Wordings, Means, and Standard Deviations (1987 Survey)

Question Wording	Mean	S.D.	N
η_1, misinformation about AIDS transmission:			
Y_1 "In your opinion, can someone catch AIDS from a toilet seat?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.316	.465	2,089
Y_2 "In your opinion, can people catch AIDS from eating food which has been handled by someone who has AIDS?" (0 = no; 1 = yes, not sure)	.274	.466	2,088
η_2, negative attitudes toward homosexuals:			
Y_5 "How do you feel about the political activity of homosexuals—that is, both gays and lesbians? Do you think that homosexuals have too little political power, or about the right amount, or do you think that homosexuals have too much political power?"(1 = too little; 3 = about the right amount, not sure; 5 = too much)	3.436	1.312	2,058
Y_6 "How would you describe your views about homosexuality? Do you generally think of yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, middle-of-the-road, somewhat conservative, or very conservative about homosexuality?" (1 = very liberal; 2 = somewhat liberal; 3 = middle-of-the-road, not sure; 4 = somewhat conservative; 5 = very conservative)	3.595	1.373	2,052
η_3, support for restricting people with AIDS—"Which of the following measures would you favor in order to control the spread of AIDS?":			
Y_9 "Would you favor or oppose adding AIDS to the list of diseases that must be quarantined?" (1 = oppose; 2 = not sure; 3 = favor)	2.115	.958	2,085
Y_{10} "Would you favor or oppose a tattoo for persons who test positive for the AIDS virus?" (1 = oppose; 2 = not sure; 3 = favor)	1.646	.901	2,079

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THE ROAD TO GERMAN UNITY:
MASS SENTIMENT IN EAST AND WEST GERMANY

MANFRED KUECHLER

Abstract This article explores mass sentiment about the pursuit of unification in both East and West Germany from early 1989 to spring 1991, when formal unification was achieved and the first all-German government had been installed. Public opinion data from various sources show that the German masses were supportive but also somewhat reluctant with regard to quick and comprehensive unification. The strong push for unification by the political leadership was not a response to grass roots sentiment but quite the contrary: the masses followed their leaders. Considerations of economic gains seem to be more important than idealistic pan-German sentiments or national chauvinism. While the East Germans displayed more enthusiasm early on, their disappointment steadily rose after the fact. As of early 1991, there are some warning signs of looming internal strife. However, as long as the West German economy continues to prosper, there seems to be no imminent threat to political continuity and stability in the united Germany.

Introduction

Over the course of less than a year, a most improbable political feat was accomplished: the formal unification of communist East Germany (also known as the German Democratic Republic—GDR) and capitalist West Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany—FRG) into a Western-style democracy, keeping its military alliance with NATO and

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:53–76 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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its political and economic ties to the European Community and the Western world. On October 3, 1990, the GDR acceded to "the territory of application of the Basic Law" in accordance with Article 23 of the West German constitution ("Basic Law"). By January 1991, free elections in all of Germany had been held and the first government of a united Germany was in place.

Given the rapid development of world politics and the overriding concern with the war in the Persian Gulf, German unification quickly vanished from the headlines of the international media. Yet, as a subject of scholarly inquiry, the process of German unification still needs to be fully understood. After all, even as recently as mid-1989, no scholarly analysis suggested that an end to Communist rule in East Germany was near and that unification in some form or the other was imminent. Scholars as well as political commentators were continually taken by surprise by the series of dramatic events: shortly after the ousting of longtime Communist party chief Erich Honecker in October 1989 and immediately following the fall of the caretaker government of Egon Krenz, the infamous Berlin Wall cracked open on November 9, 1989, allowing East Germans to move freely back and forth to the West for the first time since August 1961. This was a stunning victory for the emerging civil rights movement in East Germany and its strategy of massive but peaceful street demonstrations. Subsequently, the opposition groups in East Germany were included in governmental decision making ("Round Table"). Free elections were slated for the first half of 1990. West German chancellor Kohl pronounced a 10-point program to overcome the division of Germany in late November 1989—and managed to push through his agenda in the following months. Kohl's success is as remarkable and as puzzling as the events in the fall of 1989. Internationally, he faced grave opposition from the Soviet Union to a united Germany allied with the Western bloc. But he also had to overcome reservations and reluctance on the part of the Western allies. As much as German unification was a cherished goal in Cold War rhetoric, the prospect of imminent realization raised doubts about its nature and consequences, both domestically and abroad.

In this article, I will examine mass sentiment in both East and West Germany. What does unification mean to the Germans? What are their expectations, what are their hopes, what are their fears? What costs are the Germans willing to bear? What role for Germany do they see in a new European order? Was Chancellor Kohl pushed by public opinion, or did he have to overcome reluctance at home in addition to the obstacles in the international arena? In short, I will try to shed some light on what lies behind the pursuit of German unity, by addressing the following questions:

1. What is the salience of economic considerations compared to a sense of national and/or cultural identity? Is the current unification a marriage of convenience or the consummation of genuine love and affection?
2. To what extent are East Germans driven by expectations of quickly reaching economic affluence? To what extent are West Germans willing to share their prosperity?
3. Have the two Germanies grown apart? What are the effects of more than 40 years of communist indoctrination? Will the East Germans easily adapt to a new political and social order?
4. Are the Germans of the 1990s immune to national chauvinism? To what extent is the quest for unity related to a desire for political and/or economic hegemony?
5. Is there a danger of internal strife and social conflict as an unintended consequence of the unification? What are the prospects for continued political stability in the now larger Federal Republic of Germany?

Public opinion data on East Germans are scarce and often methodologically flawed. The empirical evidence on some of these questions, then, is rather sketchy. By way of secondary analysis, I will attempt to fit bits and pieces from various sources into a larger frame to provide an answer.

Dynamics of Support for Unification

As a starting point, it is informative to look at the long-term trend in support of unification. Drawing on data from various public opinion institutes, Jansen (1989, p. 1139) compiled several time series covering the period from the 1950s to 1987. Surveys until 1960, notwithstanding some variation in question wording, all show about 90 percent of the respondents to be in favor of unification.[1] This figure dropped just slightly to about 80 percent in the 1970s and 1980s when the policy of peaceful coexistence, the strategy of "normal" relations between the two German states, replaced the Cold War agenda.

In spite of high approval rates, the salience of unification as an issue declined. Unification became a hypothetical question. Up to the mid-1960s the majority of the West Germans thought that unification was probable (Jansen 1989, p. 1133), but concurrent with the emergence of a new *Ostpolitik*, the percentage of respondents expecting unification to happen dropped to below 20 in the late 1960s and to less than 10 percent in the 1970s, finally reaching a low of 3 percent in 1987.[2] Also, Allensbach data show that in 1955, in 1960, and in 1965 more than one-third of the respondents named reunification as the most important issue to be addressed in the Federal Republic. This percentage dropped to a little over 10 points in 1970 and to just about 2 points in 1981 (Szumni, Lichtleitner, and Bauske 1990, p. 63). In the East, identification with the GDR as an entity in its own right rose continuously through the 1970s until at least the mid-1980s as a series of youth surveys documents (Friedrich 1990, pp. 30–31).[3]

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[1] Up to early 1990, the term "reunification" (*Wiedervereinigung*) was used, which implied—or at least did not exclude—the restoration of a Germany within the borders of 1937 containing territories now part of Poland and of the Soviet Union (Silesia, East Prussia, Pomerania).

The public had accepted the existence of two German states as a fact. The very idea of unification continued to be appealing, but on a more pragmatic level, some degree of liberalization in the East (e.g., fairly unrestricted travel privileges for retirees and easier access for West Germans) seemed to satisfy the vast majority of all Germans. Family ties across the border were still maintained, but there was no emerging grass roots movement actively pushing for unification. On the level of political elites, the unification issue had become moot. Good for occasional partisan rhetoric, it was no longer the subject of major debates. Even West German conservatives, including their prime spokesman Franz-Josef Strauss, sought to make deals with the other German state: pragmatic economic interest had prevailed over pan-German ideology. On the international level, most countries seemed to be quite content with the status quo. By the late 1980s, then, German unification was no longer on the political agenda.

Turning to the recent past, strong support for unification as a hypothetical question had continued. In March 1989—well before the onset of the dramatic chain of events—78 percent of the respondents were in favor of unification. The *Politbarometer* surveys of the Forschungsgruppe Wahlen allow us to track public sentiment on unification from this point on (see table 1). There is practically no change till early fall 1989; then a reality shock occurred. After the ousting of Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) chief Honecker on October 18, when more sweeping changes became conceivable, the West German public displayed more reluctance than jubilation. The slight decrease in the percentage favoring unification in October 1989 could be no more than a random variation. But the November reading—with interviews conducted in the week immediately following the fall of the wall—of about 10 percentage points below the previous months represented a statisti-

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[2] Question wording varies; see Jansen (1989) for details.

[3] These studies were conducted at the Leipzig Central Institute for Youth Research (ZIJ) in East Germany. At the time, they were treated as classified; only now have these and many other studies become generally available.

Table 1. Support for Unification (Percentages)

	Favoring Unification		Preferring Slower Pace	
	West[a]	East[b]	West[c]	East
March 1989	78	. . .	. . .	. . .
August 1989	78	. . .	. . .	. . .
September 1989	79	. . .	. . .	. . .
October 1989	75	. . .	. . .	. . .
November 1989	70	48	. . .	. . .
December 1989	56	. . .	. . .	. . .
January 1990	74	. . .	. . .	. . .
February 1990	78	79	67	. . .
March 1990	82	84	66	54
April 1990	81	. . .	66	. . .
May 1990	83	. . .	61	. . .
	. . .	. . .	64	55
June 1990	83	. . .	. . .	. . .
August 1990	85	. . .	. . .	. . .

[a] Excerpted from FGW *Politbarometer* reports available from Forschungsgruppe Wahlen e.V., Mannheim, Germany. All *Politbarometer* surveys are based on random samples of some one thousand eligible voters in West Germany, including Berlin (West), and are conducted by telephone. Figures give percentage in favor of unification based on all respondents: "Are you personally in favor of unification of the two German states, do you oppose unification, or are you indifferent (*gleichgültig*)?" (see n. 5 above for different wording in December 1989).

[b] As reported in *Der Spiegel*, no. 11 (1990) p. 40, based on surveys of the Leipzig Central Institute for Youth Research, supposedly representative of the GDR population age 15 years and over. Figures give percentage of those "very much in favor" combined with those "rather in favor than opposed" on a balanced 4-point scale. Question stem: "How do you feel about a unification of GDR and FRG?"

[c] Excerpted from *Politbarometer* reports (February to May 1990 in the West), FGW preelection study (report no. 56, "Wahl in der DDR am 18.3.1990," p. 18), and Emnid–Usuma survey as reported in *Der Spiegel*, no. 26 (1990), p. 48 (May 1990, in both East and West Germany). For the latter study and *Politbarometer* February 1990, the figure gives the percentage of all respondents considering the pace as "too fast." Otherwise, the percentage of those preferring "to take time" is given. This was a contingency question only for those in favor of unification. The difference between the first and the third column (16 points for March, 15 for April, and 22 for May 1990) is the percentage of those in favor of quick unification.

cally significant drop. The responses to a follow-up question are even more revealing.[4] Assuming that a united Germany would be neutral, only 53 percent of all respondents favored unification. The December data point in the same direction: faced with a balanced choice between one "common state" and "two independent German states,"[5] only a slight majority continued to opt for unification, and many saw it as a long-term goal only. Asked to look 10 years ahead,[6] only 34 percent of all respondents envisioned a unified state, while 42 percent foresaw a confederation and another 21 percent pictured two independent states as before.

After the February 10, 1990, meeting of Kohl and Gorbachev in Moscow, the previous level of about 80 percent in favor of unification was reestablished. It appears that Kohl's surprising success in winning support for unification from the Soviet Union reversed the downward trend in public opinion by muting open opposition. But public reluctance showed in other ways. In February 1990, two-thirds of the respondents judged the pace of unification as "too fast" (see table 1); only a quarter thought it "just right." In March, April, and May, two-thirds of the respondents preferred "to take time"; less than 20 percent favored "very fast" unification.

Less frequent and less reliable data are available for the East Germans (see table 1). Taken at face value, the data show a dramatic increase in favor of unification from about 50 percent (including 32 percent who were "rather in favor of than opposed") in November 1989 to around 80 percent in February and March 1990, and an increase from 16 to over 40 points in the percentage of those "very much in favor of" unification. With respect to the November 1989 data, two qualifications seem to be in order: first, a still considerable reluctance fully to exercise the newly won right to freedom of speech may have biased the responses; and second, a substantial sampling bias may overrepresent adherents of the Communist party (SED/PDS [Party of Democratic Socialism]), who are obviously less inclined to favor unification.[7] To some extent these biases may also affect the later data.

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[4] If "in favor": "Are you still in favor if a reunited Germany becomes neutral, if it is neither a member of the Eastern nor of the Western alliance, or do you oppose reunification in this case?"

[5] "When you think about the future of the Federal Republic and the GDR, should the Federal Republic and the GDR form a common state, or should there be two independent German states?"

[6] "And how do you think the future of the Federal Republic and the GDR will look like 10 years from now? Will there be a common state; will there be a confederation, i.e., a 'Staatenbund' between the Federal Republic and the GDR; or will there be two independent states, as in the past?"

[7] A bias of this sort is suspected in most of the surveys conducted in the very early phase of liberation; see, e.g., Roth (1990, pp. 391–92). Given the data collection problems, it is hardly possible to separate response uncertainty and true change. Contrary

However, it seems safe to conclude that even in February and March there was no solid majority unequivocally in favor of unification though conditional support was very high. As in West Germany, a majority preferred a more measured and deliberate approach to unification (table 1) even at a time when the political leaders had made their move and quick unification was agreed upon.[8]

To summarize: consistently, West Germans have exhibited strong support for reunification (in the abstract), but the issue began to lose salience in the late 1960s and eventually became hypothetical. As unification became a tangible reality in the fall of 1989, support dropped fairly precipitously. Nevertheless, West German chancellor Kohl embarked on a course of quick unification, and the West German public responded with renewed support mitigated by concern over the pace of the unification process. The scarce data for East Germany indicate a similar pattern: high levels of overall support but also a considerable amount of reservations and uneasiness about the pace.

Expectations, Hopes, and Fears

As is often the case, it is hard to find survey data that allow us to assess why the Germans favored unification or why they were indifferent or even opposed to it.[9] However, at least in some indirect way it is possible to investigate the expectations, the hopes and fears, associated with German unification. The Wildenmann surveys of April 1990 established both an overall affective response to unification and ratings of a series of possible consequences of unification on a 4-point scale.[10] Looking at the affective response first (see table 2), we find that positive responses clearly outnumber negative and indifferent ones. Still,

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to conventional wisdom, in this case the information with respect to level at one time (February/March) may be more valid than the (gross) change over time.

[8] On April 19, East Germany's leader de Maizière declared his commitment to German unity; on April 28, the European Community heads of state welcomed German unification and prepared for the integration of East Germany into the Community; on May 18, the treaty between the two Germanies on establishing a monetary, economic, and social union was signed.

[9] This apparent neglect can be easily understood. To discover reasons and thoughts, an open-ended format and careful probing is necessary, which is both difficult and costly in terms of time and money. Schuman's (1972) work on the two sources of antiwar sentiment in the United States is a prime example that such an approach is feasible yet rather costly.

[10] These surveys were conducted by the Research Unit for Societal Developments at the University of Mannheim under the direction of Rudolf Wildenmann. Largely identical questionnaires were used with representative samples in both East and West Germany. Field work was done by Marplan; $N = 808$ (East) and $N = 1{,}700$ (West) face-to-face interviews were collected in March/April 1990.

Table 2. Feelings about German Unification (Percentages)

		Age		Party Preference			
	All Respondents	– 34 years	34 + years	CDU	FDP	SPD	GRN
West:							
Very pleased	19	14	21	24	19	16	10
Pleased	55	53	57	57	62	56	41
Not pleased/indifferent	26	33	22	19	19	28	49
N	1,687	490	1,197	669	89	747	98

		Age		Party Preference		
	All Respondents	– 34 years	34 + years	CDU +	SPD	PDS
East:						
Very pleased	41	35	44	49	36	13
Pleased	50	55	48	46	57	44
Not pleased/indifferent	9	10	8	5	7	43
N	806	271	535	397	316	61

NOTE.—Surveys conducted by the Research Unit for Societal Developments at the University of Mannheim under the direction of Rudolf Wildenmann. Largely identical questionnaires were used with representative samples in both East and West Germany. Field work was done by Marplan; $N = 808$ (East) and $N = 1{,}700$ (West) face-to-face interviews were collected in March/April 1990. Question wording: "Leaving aside detailed plans and procedures, German unification is more or less agreed upon. How do you feel about this? Are you very pleased (*erfreut*), pleased, not pleased, or indifferent (*gleichgültig*)?" CDU + for East Germany represents the "Alliance for Germany," i.e., it includes DSU and DA. See nn. 12 and 20 above for further information on German parties.

the feelings of one in four West German respondents fall short of delight.[11]

To be more specific, table 2 shows that people under 35 years of age in the West were significantly less enthusiastic about unification than the older ones. The issue was also highly partisan: major portions of the adherents of the Social Democrats (SPD) and Greens in the West and of PDS followers in the East were not pleased with the prospect of unification.[12] Along other sociodemographic lines like sex, education, and income no major differences emerged. Still, in the East and in the West, low-income respondents were somewhat less enthusiastic than more affluent ones.

To go beyond general affect: what consequences of unification do the Germans expect? Respondents in both Germanies were presented with a set of 12 statements to be rated on a 4-point scale.[13] Unfortunately, these 12 statements only partially cover the range of questions pursued here (see table 3). Most important, the prospect of political dominance of Europe by a unified Germany and the possibility of renewed military aggressiveness—at the heart of concern and reluctance abroad—are not covered. The reference to increased German self-confidence (statement F) is a distant proxy at best. Similarly, the possibility of internal strife due a deeply segmented labor market, unemployment, "dispossessed" segments of the population (e.g., East German military and secret police forces), etc., is not explicitly addressed.

Comparing East and West Germans, in April 1990 the East Germans display a much more optimistic outlook. Consistently, they are more likely to agree with positive consequences, and they are less likely to see negative or skeptical expectations as fitting. In contrast, among

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[11] The characterization of this question as measuring an affective response is based on the original German question wording. The English translation given in table 2 may not fully capture the semantics of the original. The crucial part (second sentence) reads: "Was fühlen Sie dabei?"

[12] For readers less familiar with the German party system, a brief characterization of the major parties may be helpful: the Christian Democrats (CDU) are the predominantly conservative party of Konrad Adenauer, Ludwig Erhardt, and now Helmut Kohl, with an average share of some 45 percent of the West German electorate. Their main opponents are the Social Democrats (SPD) of Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, who have a slightly smaller clientele. The Liberals (FDP) of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher typically command less than 10 percent of the vote; given the German proportional system, however, they have been part of most postwar German governments. The Greens (GRN) are a relatively young party that grew out of the environmental movement and that follows a Left political agenda advocating grass roots politics. The Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) is the communist party, formerly known as the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) of Walter Ulbricht and Erich Honecker. Its current leader is Gregor Gysi.

[13] In German, the scale was labeled as "trifft voll und ganz zu," "trifft eher zu," "trifft eher nicht zu," and "trifft überhaupt nicht zu." It is difficult to find a full equivalent in English. The first category may best be translated into "absolutely true."

Table 3. Consequences of German Unification Regarded as "Absolutely True" (Percentages)

Statement	West	East
A: Great difficulties in reconciling the social systems	45.5	36.8
B: Germany will be preoccupied with its own problems for years to come	36.5	26.5
G: There will be a turn to the better in every aspect of public life, e.g., sports, culture	33.1	43.6
I: New investment opportunities in the GDR create new jobs and further stimulate the economy	30.8	39.0
C: The unified Germany will be even stronger economically than before	27.7	47.6
E: The West Germans will get a little poorer; the East Germans will get a little richer	22.5	12.0
F: German self-confidence will increase	21.6	37.7
H: There will be many more parties	20.1	20.9
M: A unified Germany will be less cosmopolitan than the FRG	10.9	4.5
D: Transition problems will be resolved quickly	9.2	9.4
K: A unified Germany will be neutral	9.2	11.0
L: The current "social market economy" as practiced in the FRG will be diluted	8.7	3.2

NOTE.—Source same as for table 2. Question wording: "On this list you find a number of statements about what consequences the unification of the German states into one single state might have. Please tell me for each one whether this is absolutely true, largely true, largely not true, or not true at all (ob Sie Ihrer Ansicht nach voll und ganz zutrifft, eher zutrifft, eher nicht zutrifft oder überhaupt nicht zutrifft)." In each column the percentage of those finding a statement "absolutely true" is given—based on all respondents ($N = 1{,}700$ in the West and $N = 808$ in the East). The letters indicate the sequence order of the statements in the questionnaire. The difference in the percentages of the East German and West German sample are all statistically significant (on the .0001 level) except for items H, D, and K.

West Germans two skeptical statements (A and B) draw the most agreement: 45 percent fully agree that it will be difficult to reconcile the two social systems; 36 percent foresee that Germany will be preoccupied with its own problems for years to come. On both counts the corresponding percentage in East Germany is about 10 points lower. But almost half the East Germans fully expect that the united Germany will be even stronger economically and that there will be an upswing in every conceivable aspect of public life such as in sports, in cultural affairs, and even in social interaction—*im Umgang miteinander*, an idyllic image of affluence in a kind and gentle society.

Table 4. Percentage regarding Each Statement as Absolutely True by Feelings about Unification in East and West Germany

	Very Pleased		Not Pleased/ Indifferent	
Statement	West	East	West	East
G: Broad-scale upswing	51.1	$47.6^{\text{n.s.}}$	19.7	48.6***
I: GDR investment opportunities	49.2	$44.5^{\text{n.s.}}$	16.5	31.9**
C: Increased economic power	41.7	50.9*	14.6	37.5***
A: System reconciliation	36.4	28.8*	57.9	$65.3^{\text{n.s.}}$
F: Increased self-confidence	35.1	46.7**	13.0	$20.8^{\text{n.s.}}$
B: Preoccupation with own problems	27.9	$22.7^{\text{n.s.}}$	51.5	$55.6^{\text{n.s.}}$
Group size	319	330	437	72

Note.—Percentages are based on all respondents in each group. For source and question wording, see tables 2 and 3. Differences of percentages between East and West Germans are marked as "n.s." if they are not statistically significant on the .05 level; significance on the .01 level is indicated by **, significance on the .001 level by ***. All differences between the two West German groups are significant on the .0001 level. For the two East German groups, differences for items A, B, and F are significant on the .001 level and on the .05 level for items C and I.

To dig a little deeper: what are the concerns of those skeptical; what are the hopes of those rejoicing? Comparing the expectations of those "very pleased with" and of those "indifferent or not pleased with" unification in both East and West Germany (see table 4) reveals some marked differences. On the one hand, those unenthusiastic are much more concerned with the difficulties in reconciling the social system and much more frequently anticipate that Germany will be preoccupied with its own problems (statements A and B). On the other hand, increased economic power and affluence seem to be foremost on the mind of those feeling very positive about unification—in both East and West. With respect to economic prosperity (statements C and I), however, the less enthusiastic respondents in the East do not trail far behind, while their counterparts in the West are decidedly more skeptical about the economic outlook.

On other issues, the rather fuzzy statement about an upswing in every aspect of public life (item G) draws high uniform support in the GDR but sharply separates the two groups in the West. In contrast, the aspect of increased German self-confidence (item F) discriminates sharply in both East and West. Overall, the data document high salience of the economic aspect of German unification. Expectations of (further) growth and affluence run high among respondents very pleased with the prospect of unification.

Additional insight on the expectations associated with unification is provided by the *Politbarometer* surveys throughout 1990.[14] In West Germany, notwithstanding some minor random fluctuation, only some 10 percent of the respondents saw mostly advantages in the short run and some 35 percent felt that advantages and disadvantages balance, while about half of the respondents perceived mostly disadvantages for the West Germans in the immediate future. Most frequently named among the disadvantages were tax increases (up to 40 percent of all respondents), followed by a perceived burden on the economy and negative effects on the job market and on housing. In East Germany, a similar assessment produced distinctly more positive responses. Here, about 20 percent of the respondents saw mostly advantages and an additional 40 percent felt that advantages and disadvantages would balance (Roth 1990, p. 386, table 8). The response pattern changes drastically, though, when the long-term effect is assessed. Then, close to 50 percent of the West German respondents and about 60 percent of the East Germans see mostly advantages, while the percentage of those seeing mostly disadvantages drops to less than 10 points. Unfortunately, respondents were only prompted to specify the disadvantages perceived, not the advantages in the additional open-ended probe. We do not know for sure what these perceived advantages were, but is it plausible to assume that these (long-term) advantages were mainly noneconomic? Unrestricted freedom of speech, freedom of travel, family reunion, etc.—all these had been achieved early on. Consequently, these advantages would have been perceived as imminent, as short term. In contrast, economic improvements were not to come overnight. Even in a best case scenario, these needed time to materialize.

Solidarity and Sacrifice

Were the West Germans ready to make sacrifices for unification? This question was addressed by the Allensbach Institute (directed by Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann) in a survey commissioned by the Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit* in February 1990.[15] Overall, less than 25 percent of the respondents were ready to make sacrifices, but 69 percent were in favor of unification—paying lip service only? Again, distinct age and partisan patterns emerged. Both general approval and readiness to make sacrifices decline when younger respondents are compared to older ones and adherents of the parties on the Left are contrasted to those of the governing conservative-liberal coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Liberals (FDP) (see table 5 for details). Over time, Allensbach had measured the readiness to make sacrifices, using a rather elaborate vignette question describing a possible political scenario and a 10-year surtax plan affecting all incomes beyond a moderate threshold (DM 1,900 or about $1,200 per month in 1990). Unequivocal approval of such a plan dropped from 17 percent in 1959 and over 16 percent and 12 percent in 1967 and 1969 to just 5 percent in 1990, while staunch opposition rose from 59 percent in 1959 to 77 percent in 1990. In 1959, 1967, and 1969 the political scenario provided in the vignette was truly hypothetical; in February 1990 unification was a realistic policy option. No concrete tax plans had been introduced at the time of the survey, but 75 percent of the respondents anticipated "significant tax increases." More generally, major portions of the respondents anticipated negative consequences: higher social security taxes, ever increasing budget deficits, higher interests on loans and mortgages, loss of currency stability, social security cuts, and more (see table 5). At best, some 25 percent, however, felt that they could live with these consequences.[16] The *Zeit* headline said it all: "Unity? Yes, but cheap, please!"

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[14] "Do you think that a reunification of the two German states will have mostly advantages or mostly disadvantages for the West German population in the short run, or that advantages and disadvantages will even out? And how about the long run?" This question was asked in every month from February to October 1990; an additional open-ended probe about the nature of expected disadvantages was included in February, April, and May.

[15] A summary of the findings is published in *Die Zeit* of March 9, 1990 (p. 3).

In contrast, *Politbarometer* data from the fall of 1990 show a somewhat more altruistic picture. In spite of Chancellor Kohl's frequent assurance that tax increases would not be necessary to finance German unity, the public read his lips differently: between 70 percent and 80 percent of the West German respondents expected a tax increase. At this point, almost 50 percent agreed with a hypothetical increase.[17]

The extent of German-German solidarity also can be assessed by the attitude toward East German refugees—later on, emigrants. The Emnid and *Politbarometer* surveys allow us to track the changes in public opinion from March 1989 to April 1990 (see table 6). Emnid repeatedly asked whether all refugees should be accepted or whether their number should be reduced. Over the course of 1 year, the percentage of respondents in favor of unconditional acceptance rose from 28 in March 1989 to a maximum of 63 in October 1989 before falling back to 22 points in February 1990. The sudden rise is closely matched

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[16] German wording: "Das kann man in Kauf nehmen."

[17] "And now, the financing of German unity. Do you think it is possible to do without tax increases or don't you think so? And if taxes are raised for a certain period of time, would you agree with this or not (sind Sie damit einverstanden)?" This question was included each month from September to December 1990, with largely identical results.

Table 5. Inclination of West Germans to Make Sacrifices (Percentages)

		Age				Party Preference			
	All Respondents	16–29	30–44	45–59	60+	CDU	FDP	SPD	GRN
Preparedness:[a]									
Fully prepared	24	16	21	28	36	33	25	17	14
Less prepared	51	63	55	47	37	42	37	58	66
Impossible to say	25	25	24	25	27	25	38	25	20
N = 1,109									
						Expecting			Tolerating
Expectations and tolerance of effects of unification:[b]									
Significant tax increases						75			27
Social security tax increase						61			26
Increasing federal budget deficit						61			23
Credit shortage, higher interest rates						47			24
DM loses stability						44			15
Cuts in social benefits						38			8
Pension payment problems						35			3
No wage increases for some time						34			21
DM devaluation						29			8
Inflation						14			2

NOTE.—Data as reported in *Die Zeit*, no. 11, of March 9, 1990, p. 3, based on a survey conducted by Institut für Demoskopie, Allensbach.

[a] "How would you rate yourself, are you fully prepared to make sacrifices or less than fully prepared? (Würden Sie von sich selbst sagen, ist Ihre Opferbereitschaft groß oder nicht so groß?)"

[b] "What will happen, what would you tolerate? (Was wird kommen, was nehmen Sie in Kauf?)"

Table 6. West German Attitudes toward Refugees/Emigrants from East Germany (Percentages)

	In Favor of "Accepting All" vs. "Reducing Their Number" (A)	"Welcoming GDR Emigrants" (B)	"Fully Understanding People Still Emigrating" (C)	"Eliminating"/ "Reducing" Benefits for GDR Emigrants (D)	"Benefits Too High" for GDR Emigrants (E)
March 1989	28	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
May 1989 (Hungary opens border)	36	. . .	. . .	. . .	. . .
August 1989 (Mass exodus via Hungary)	44	49	. . .	. . .	. . .
September 1989 (Prague embassy crisis)	62	66	. . .	. . .	. . .
October 1989 (Honecker resigns)	63	64	. . .	. . .	. . .
November 1989 (FRG-GDR border opens)	59	69	. . .	. . .	. . .
December 1989	44	. . .	26	42[a]	. . .
January 1990	33	. . .	22	52	56
Feburary 1990	22	. . .	23	22/62	71
March 1990	. . .	. . .	13	38/52	. . .
April 1990	. . .	. . .	11	47/44	. . .

NOTE.—Data in cols. A and E as reported in *Der Spiegel*, no. 9 (1990), p. 48, based on an Emnid survey. Data in cols. B, C, and D excerpted from FGW *Politbarometer* reports.

[a] Different wording in December 1989 and January 1990; percentage of those feeling that emigrants receive "too many benefits."

by a series of spectacular attempts to leave the GDR via other socialist countries and the West German embassies there. Collective action generated vast and predominantly sympathetic media coverage that in turn may have triggered positive public sentiment. These early refugees were perceived as willing to take great personal risk and suffer hardship and therefore as deserving empathy and support. At the same time, their numbers were still relatively small. They caused some administrative problems, but they were not likely to impact seriously on the social fabric of West Germany.

However, the surge of support quickly came to a stop after Honecker was ousted and the border between East and West was open at last. Faced with increasing numbers of East Germans trekking West, calls for reducing their numbers gained in support very quickly. The Emnid data (table 6, col. A) are corroborated by *Politbarometer* data (table 6, cols. B, C). Throughout the fall, two-thirds of all respondents welcomed the GDR refugees; in December 1989, however, barely one-quarter expressed full understanding for people still emigrating, and the support quickly dwindled to just 11 percent by April 1990. At the same time, a growing majority of West Germans felt that the benefits offered to East German refugees were not justified and should be reduced, if not eliminated altogether (table 6, cols. D, E). As of April 1990 about 50 percent favored downright discontinuation of these benefits and over 90 percent of all respondents favored at least a reduction.

Before and after Formal Unification

Summarizing the situation on the eve of unification and drawing on the data presented here as well as qualitative evidence gathered from news reports, personal observation, and informal interviews, the following gestalt emerges. Above all, the East Germans wanted their share of the "good life," not just material affluence but also adventure, excitement, personal freedom. The Leipzig studies provide ample evidence for this strong trend toward personal fulfillment among large segments of the youth and young adults in the last few years.[18] Friedrich (1990, p. 36) argues that this trend will continue and expresses mixed feelings about the social consequences. On the one hand, he sees people as ready and eager to take charge of their lives and to make the most out of their gifts and talents. On the other hand, he fears that people may become more self-centered, politically indifferent, and/or opportunistic—even that they may become more susceptible to extremism.

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[18] See n. 3 above.

The East Germans seem to be thoroughly wary of any ideology restricting the individual pursuit of wealth and happiness. Consequently, the grass roots organizations pivotal in organizing opposition and finally bringing down the old regime—most notably the Neues Forum and Demokratie Jetzt—were quickly abandoned by the masses. Their electoral alliance (Bündnis 90) received less than 3 percent of the popular vote in the March elections with another 2 percent going to an alliance of Green and feminist groups.[19] Their idealistic call for evolutionary renewal, for some sort of socialism with a humane face, went largely unheard over the lure of quick affluence by accepting unification on West German terms. In addition, the East German civil rights movement lacked a charismatic leader, a German Vaclav Havel: a leader symbolizing the hope for a more equitable and more humane, not just a more affluent, society.

The East Germans wanted affluence and freedom, but with freedom suddenly and, in a way, easily won and secured, economic gains became their predominant concern. Quite a bit of help was expected from the West Germans. The "poor relatives" were knocking on the door, not obsequiously but with a sense of collecting an overdue debt. The West Germans, however, were not overly accommodating. They certainly welcomed the downfall of the Communist regime in East Germany, but for the most part they were reluctant to share and to make sacrifices.

The December elections mark the end of the first, the formal, phase of the unification period. The results brought few surprises. After a dull campaign, the governing coalition of Christian Democrats (CDU) and Liberals (FDP) gained a comfortable majority, with almost 55 percent of the vote. In the East, the CDU managed to keep its commanding lead of the March 1990 *Volkskammer* elections through the year. Its share in East Germany declined from 48.0 percent to 42.8 percent in December, but Foreign Minister Genscher's FDP rose from 5.3 percent to 12.9 percent in the same period.[20] However, for Chancellor Kohl and his party the results were disappointing at the same time: the share for the CDU/CSU (Christian Social Union) reached a new low after the very first election in 1949. The opposition fared worse than the governing parties: the West German Greens lost almost half of their voters compared to 1987 and failed to clear the 5 percent threshold for parliamentary representation;[21] the SPD suffered a decline of 3.5 points, down to 33.5 percent of the vote—its worst showing since 1957. And for the renamed communists (PDS), the decline continued: from 16.4 percent in March to 11.1 percent in the Eastern part and gaining just .3 percent in West Germany, for a total share of 2.4 percent.[22] The right extremist Republicans fared better than most polls predicted, gaining 2.1 percent of the vote, but they stayed well below the 5 percent threshold.

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[19] The now formal alliance between the Greens and the Bündnis 90 received 5.9 percent of the vote in the December elections. This indicates a stable but rather small voter clientele.

[20] These figures include the vote share of the Demokratischer Aufbruch (DA; a citizens' group) and the newly founded East German version of the CDU's Bavarian sister party, the DSU (German Social Union). As of March 1990, these two contributed .9 percent and 6.3 percent to the total; by December the DA was defunct and the DSU share was down to 1.0 percent.

The turnout reached a record low of 77.8 percent.[23] This may be just a reflection of the fact that the outcome seemed obvious and that the parties failed to mobilize complacent voters. However, it may also be a first indication that the public had become wary, that doubts about Kohl's unification strategy and its true economic implications were emerging. Given the lack of viable alternatives and with discontent still at a moderate level, abstention rather than support for extreme parties was a plausible choice for the voter. All things considered, the December elections did not constitute an *ex post* referendum on unification, a resounding acclamation of Chancellor Kohl's strategy. Rather, as in the past, vote choices strongly correlated with the perceived economic competence of the parties (see Kuechler [1991] for a more detailed election analysis).

With the first government of the new Germany in place and no more need for the government to woo the voter, the second phase of unification truly began. But was political life really returning to normal, back to business as usual, as some scholars suggest (e.g., Gibowski and Kaase 1991)? Issues related to unification had dominated the public agenda since September 1989. In West Germany, consistently over 50 percent of all respondents named these issues in response to a probe about the two most important problems facing the nation.[24] In contrast, the gulf crisis received rather little attention. For example, in Decem-

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21. Resenting the takeover strategies of CDU, FDP, and SPD, the West German Greens opted against a formal alliance with the East German Greens and the groups of the Bündnis 90. Had they engaged in such an alliance, the combined Greens would have gained 35 instead of 8 seats, everything else being equal.

22. Nevertheless, and in contrast to the West German Greens, the PDS gained a total of 17 seats since it was sufficient to pass the 5 percent threshold in East or in West Germany—following a decision of the Supreme Court. However, this ruling is not binding for future elections. In all likelihood, a uniform 5 percent rule will be in effect for the next elections in 1994.

23. Given American standards, this may appear very high. However, in (West) Germany turnout for national elections usually exceeded 90 percent.

24. Again, data come from the *Politbarometer* series. An open-ended prompt is used to establish the two most important problems. Coding categories are subject to some change over time. This makes it difficult to describe trends in strictly quantitative terms.

ber 1990 just 6 percent of the respondents in the West and 4 percent in the East mentioned the Gulf crisis. With the outbreak of the war, these figures rose dramatically, to 67 percent in the West and to 31 percent in the East as of January 1991. The difference between East and West Germans was remarkable though. Obviously, the problems of German unification are much more immediate in the East: labor statistics show a steady increase in unemployment. The official rate reached 9.2 percent in March. However, factual unemployment was closer to 30 percent and was expected to reach up to 50 percent by July 1, when temporary protection measures against layoffs in many formerly state-owned and now defunct companies would run out.[25] It is not surprising, then, that 57 percent of the respondents in the East mentioned unemployment and 45 percent mentioned other economic issues in Janaury 1991, surpassing a concern with the war. And the salience of this issue further increased in February and March.

In the first few months of 1991, dissatisfaction in the East about the course of unification had reached high levels (see table 7). Over 60 percent of employed respondents were afraid of losing their jobs; over 75 percent of all respondents rated the economic development in the new era (*seit der Wende*) as "rather not successful" than as "rather successful"; about 80 percent of the East Germans were dissatisfied with the gains in terms of achieving the Western standard of living, and even more felt that the Bonn government was not doing enough; 84 percent gave bad marks to the agency in charge of reorganizing and privatizing the formerly state-owned factories (*Treuhandanstalt*); about the same number felt that the differences in wages and salaries between East and West Germany were unjust.[26]

With respect to the general economic situation, the percentage of those rating the current situation as bad continuously rose from 60 percent in December 1990 to over 80 percent in March 1991. In the same period, the share of those expecting an improvement 1 year ahead dropped from 60 percent to a little over 40 percent (see table 8). And with growing economic disappointment, the rating for the CDU as "the party liked best" dropped from 44.2 percent in December 1990 to 31.1 percent in March 1991. Finally, by March 1991 over 60 percent of the East Germans were "rather dissatisfied than satisfied with de-

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[25] As reported in *This Week in Germany* of April 5, 1991 (p. 4).

[26] As a rule of thumb, wages and salaries in East Germany are about 40 percent of those in West Germany as of spring 1991. While differential productivity may serve as a justification in industry and manufacturing, these differences were also found in the public service sector, e.g., for postal workers, teachers, etc. In the public sector, wages and salaries were to be raised to 60 percent of West German levels starting July 1, 1991.

Table 7. Percentages for Selected Response Categories Reflecting East Germans' Views on Current State of Unification

Statement	January 1991	February 1991	March 1991
A. Job "not secure" (employed respondents only)	60.1	62.1	62.6
	. . .	6.5[a]	. . .
B. Economic development since change (*Wende*) "rather not successful"	77.6	. . .	. . .
C. Work of agency in charge of privatization of state-owned plants and factories "rather not good"	84.0	. . .	. . .
D. With regard to reaching Western standard of living:			
"Rather dissatisfied"	77.5	78.5	81.6
"Bonn government does not do enough"	. . .	84.4	86.4
	. . .	. . .	39.3[a]
E. Differences in wages and salaries "rather unjust"	83.1	84.5	. . .
	44.0[a]	48.5[a]	. . .
F. With respect to new laws and regulations, "rather dissatisfied"	. . .	58.9	. . .
G. Course of unification overall "worse than expected"	. . .	. . .	64.1
H. Expectations of unification with respect to personal situation "rather not met"	. . .	. . .	62.2

NOTE.—All data excerpted from *Politbarometer* reports (see table 1, n. a). Unless otherwise noted, percentages are based on all respondents.

[a] Comparison figure for West German respondents.

Table 8. Perception of Current and Future Economic Situation in One's Own Part of Germany (Percentages)

	Current[a]				Future[b]			
	Good		Bad		Better		Worse	
	West	East	West	East	West	East	West	East
December 1990	69.3	3.2	2.7	59.8	20.3	59.8	25.1	9.8
January 1991	74.4	2.0	3.6	66.6	16.1	46.5	32.6	15.5
Feburary 1991	. . .	1.8	. . .	74.5	. . .	42.7	. . .	18.4
March 1991	. . .	1.3	. . .	82.0	. . .	42.5	. . .	22.2

NOTE.—All data excerpted from *Politbarometer* reports (see table 1, n. a). Percentages are based on all respondents in each part of Germany; middle categories are omitted to improve legibility.

[a] "How do you rate quite generally (*ganz allgemein*) the current economic situation in East (West) Germany, i.e., in the former GDR (Bundesrepublik)? Is it good, part good/part bad, or bad?"

[b] "And what will be 1 year from now? Do you expect that the general economic situation in East (West) Germany will then be better, the same, or worse?"

mocracy, with the political system overall"—an increase of almost 20 percentage points since December 1990.[27]

In West Germany, mild optimism seemed to prevail by spring 1991. Before the fact, in August 1990, almost half of the respondents felt that the unification process had gone worse than expected; only 15 percent saw positive surprises. By November 1990, the figures were reversed: about one-third of the respondents thought that things were going better than expected, and less than a quarter saw a more negative development than expected. With a tax increase becoming official in March 1991, still half of the respondents consented. But solidarity with the East still had its limits: less than half of the West Germans felt that the differences in wages and salaries were unjust (see table 7). Also, less than 40 percent felt that East German complaints about a lack of improvements were justified,[28] and about the same number only felt that the Bonn government did not do enough for the East Germans (see table 7).

The generally positive mood of the West German public is not surprising, though. As of spring 1991, unification had not adversely affected the West German economy: the inflation rate for 1990 was at 2.7 percent (slightly down from 2.8 percent in 1989); the annual average number of unemployed was below the 2 million mark for the first time since 1982; and the GNP increased by 4.6 percent (compared to 3.9 percent in 1989). Only the public budget deficit had increased markedly compared to 1989, from DM 25.9 billion to DM 60.3 billion for the first 9 months of each year.

Conclusion

As an abstract idea, a vast majority of the West Germans—and, it seems safe to assume, of the East Germans as well—had always been in favor of (re-)unification. However, by the late 1980s, unification had become a hypothetical question; the reality of two German states had been widely accepted. The fall of the Communist regime in East Germany, then, took everybody by surprise. While all Germans were united in celebration of the newly won freedom for the East Germans, the public was not prepared for a quick unification of the two states. West German chancellor Kohl took the lead, and the masses eventually followed—somewhat reluctant and wary of negative consequences.[29]

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[27] Figures on party preference and satisfaction with democracy also are excerpted from *Politbarometer* reports (see table 1, n. c).

[28] "And now about the situation in East Germany: many East Germans are dissatisfied with what has been done so far to improve their standard of living. Is this justified or not justified?" (*Politbarometer* March 1991).

The data show that economic expectations strongly shaped mass sentiment toward unification in both East and West Germany. The East Germans expected rapid and significant improvements in their standard of living, but the West Germans were not eager to share. They showed little inclination to make sacrifices. And they were assured by Chancellor Kohl that this would not be necessary. Supposedly, unification was a non-zero-sum game with winners only. The message was too good to be true, and doubts kept lingering on. Initially, the East Germans were more enthusiastic about unification than the West Germans. After the fact, by spring 1991, the situation was reversed: a vast majority of the East Germans showed marked signs of disappointment with the unification process and its economic benefits and displayed considerable dissatisfaction with the political system of the Federal Republic of Germany to which they now belonged. It remains to be seen whether the East Germans will successfully adapt to the new political and social order—particularly if economic improvements continue to come slowly, at best. There are some early warning signs that internal strife may emerge; East and West Germans have not become any closer over the process of unification. The majority of the West Germans feel that the East Germans want too much too quickly. Starting in July all Germans will experience the effect of the substantial surcharge on income and gasoline tax in very direct ways, while up to half of the labor force in the East may be unemployed.

In March 1991, about two-thirds of the West Germans considered Kohl's promise not to raise taxes as fraud and as a lie (*Wahlbetrug* und *Steuerlüge*), and the popularity of both the government and Kohl as its leader was steadily declining.[30] In addition to low standings in the polls, the Christian Democrats lost the state elections in Rhineland-Palatinate—Kohl's home state, where the CDU had ruled since the end of World War II—in April 1991. Yet, as long as the West German economy continues to prosper, as it did in 1990, there seems to be no serious threat to the basic political order.

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[29] Space limitations preclude a detailed discussion of whether Kohl had viable options or whether he may have been driven by a genuine belief in a historic mission to restore German unity and to secure a permanent separation of the East Germans from the Eastern bloc. Whatever his true motives, his strategy constituted a masterpiece in electoral politics. With his party trailing in the polls and his personal image as a leader badly tarnished in late 1989, the governing coalition scored a decisive—though maybe Pyrrhic—victory at the end of the formal unification process.

[30] Question wording: "The parties of the governing coalition in Bonn are faulted for not telling the voters during the campaign that taxes would need to be increased after the elections. Some talk of election fraud (*Wahlbetrug*) and a tax lie (*Steuerlüge*). Do you think that this charge (*Vorwurf*) is right or wrong?"

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LITTLE WHITE LIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE MODELS

CORRELATED RESPONSE ERRORS IN A PANEL STUDY OF VOTING

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Abstract One interpretation for the common survey finding that the background characteristics of vote overreporters resemble those of actual voters is that misreporters usually vote. This hypothesis—that misreporters regularly voted in earlier elections—is tested with data from the 1972–74–76 Michigan Election Panel. It receives no support: the 1972 and 1974 validated turnout of the 1976 misreporters was very low. Moreover, misreporting was a fairly stable respondent characteristic: misreporting about an election in one interview was correlated with misreporting about the remaining elections in each of the other two interviews. A comparison of regressions predicting turnout using the validated reports versus the self-reports shows that the respondent errors can distort conclusions about the correlates of voting. For example, controlling for three other variables, education was related to self-reported voting but not to validated voting. Here, as well as in surveys of other socially desirable or undesirable issues, respondent self-reports may bias survey data in favor of commonsense models of the world.

Although in principle there are many different ways to study the social world (Webb et al. 1981), in practice the findings of contemporary social science are based to a remarkable degree on the accounts people give of themselves. Social science is dominated by survey research

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:77–86 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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(Presser 1984b), and "survey researchers rarely go beyond self-report" (Converse 1987, p. 415).

Despite the importance of self-reports, we know only a modest amount about their accuracy. In part this is because validating survey responses through comparisons with an independent source of information is both difficult and expensive. Each variable to be validated requires two data collections: the survey itself and a record or observational check. To examine only half a dozen variables, data may have to be collected from six different sources in addition to the main survey. As a result, external validation studies frequently look at only one or two variables. This discourages researchers from doing them, since the payoff from a major effort may be confined to such a small fraction of a survey's many variables.[1]

One of the areas where there has been significant validation work is electoral participation. A number of studies using administrative records show that retrospective reports of voting contain considerable error. The voting claims of roughly 15 percent of respondents are usually found to be inaccurate (e.g., Parry and Crossley 1950; Traugott and Katosh 1979). As virtually all the error is in the socially desirable direction, this means that about 30 percent of the nonvoters are typically misclassified as voters (nonvoters making up approximately half of the total population).

Who are these misreporters? They tend to resemble actual voters. Weiss (1968, p. 626) found that "on those characteristics that differentiate actual voters from nonvoters, the biased respondent . . . approximates the true voter in attitudes and attributes." Tittle and Hill (1967, p. 104) discovered that "in every instance those incorrectly claiming that they had voted resembled more closely the actual voters than the nonvoters." Similarly, Hill and Hurley (1984) reported that misreporters looked like voters on sex, education, interest, and efficacy, though not on age and income. And Silver, Anderson, and Abramson (1986) showed that the same variables that predicted actual turnout also predicted misreporting among nonvoters.

Why do misreporters resemble voters? It may be that they are in fact habitual voters whose behavior in one election deviated from their usual behavior. As Tittle and Hill (1967, p. 105) suggested, "perhaps their reported voting indicated that they normally do vote and that their failure to vote in a particular election was due to peculiar circumstances." This idea is embodied in *The American Voter*'s explanation of why misreporting might vary across election types: "In high turnout elections there are fewer 'usual' voters who missed voting and who are therefore under some psychological pressure to misrepresent their behavior" (Campbell et al. 1960, p. 96). According to this interpretation, it is because misreporters typically vote that they are likely either to misremember voting or to feel embarrassed at admitting they did not vote.

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[1] In addition, the standard against which responses are validated may itself contain errors. In this article we make the assumption common in most validation work that disagreements between the survey and the standard (in our case, official records) reflect respondent misreporting. But this is an oversimplification, as at least some of the record entries are probably in error, and mistakes may have been made in matching survey cases to record cases.

This line of reasoning implies that the consequences of measurement error may not be too serious. If misreporters are usual voters, misclassifying them as having voted in a particular election may not distort conclusions about the determinants of voting in general.

In the following analysis both parts of this argument are tested. We examine whether people who misreport in one election voted in prior elections and we explore the consequences of their incorrect reports in modeling the causes of turnout. We then discuss the implications of our results for the typical practice of ignoring nonrandom measurement error.

Methods and Results

Testing the hypothesis that misreporters voted in prior elections requires measures of validated votes over a series of elections for the same individuals. Such data are available from the 1976 University of Michigan election study. A national sample of citizens was interviewed in person following the November election that year and asked whether they had voted. In addition, verification checks of the respondents' 1976 voting records as well as those from 1972 and 1974 were carried out in the summer of 1977. Using these data it is possible to identify misreporters in the 1976 election and then examine their prior turnout in 1972 and 1974.

Table 1 shows the 1972 and 1974 validated turnout for three groups of respondents: those who accurately reported they did not vote in 1976; those who accurately said they did vote in 1976; and those who claimed to have voted in 1976 but did not. If the misreporters are habitual voters, then their validated 1972 and 1974 turnout should resemble that of the true 1976 voters.

As may be seen in the table, there is no support for the hypothesis. The prior turnout level for the 1976 misreporters is dramatically lower than that for the 1976 validated voters. In fact, it is essentially indistinguishable from the prior turnout for the other 1976 *non*voters. Far from being habitual voters with a momentary lapse, these inaccurate reporters almost never voted, at least in this sequence of elections.

Table 1. Vote Report Status by Validated Prior Voting Behavior, 1976 American National Election Study Cross-section

Validated 1972 and 1974 Votes	Admitted Not Voting in 1976 (%)	Accurately Claimed to Have Voted in 1976 (%)	1976 Nonvoters Who Claimed They Voted in 1976 (%)
Voted in neither election	94.5	27.4	87.9
Voted in one election	3.0	22.4	8.7
Voted in both elections	2.5	50.2	3.3
	100	100	99.9
	(1,196)	(2,319)	(539)

NOTE.—This table contains both panel and nonpanel cases and uses the 1976 cross-section sample weight (V4008). The weight is required, as the panel cases were sampled with different probabilities of selection than the nonpanel cases. The later tables do not use a weight, as they include only panel cases. Numbers in parentheses are *N*'s.

Knowing that the 1976 misreporters rarely voted in the two preceding elections, it is of interest to know whether they would have misreported about these earlier elections as well. We are able to address this issue, as part of the 1976 sample comes from the 1972–74–76 panel that had been interviewed in both the 1972 and 1974 postelection surveys.

The data presented in table 2 show that inaccuracy across the three surveys is related. For each pair of surveys, over 90 percent of those who reported accurately about one election also reported accurately about the other. By contrast, only about half of those who falsely claimed to have voted in one survey reported accurately in another. Thus, errors of report are correlated between surveys. Answering truthfully about voting is apparently a quite stable respondent characteristic.

These results suggest an alternate explanation of why misreporters resemble validated voters on characteristics like education and interest: they misreport on those questions as well. It is just as easy to exaggerate one's educational attainment or political interest as it is to claim falsely to have voted, and if misreporting is correlated across time, it may also be correlated across items.

Do vote misreporters exaggerate on other questions as well? A direct

Table 2. Relationship of Inaccuracy in Self-reported Vote in Pairs of Elections, 1972–1976

	Accurate (%)	Inaccurate (%)
	Report in 1972	
Report in 1974 was:		
Accurate	91.3	58.3
Inaccurate	8.7	41.7
	100	100
	(865)	(230)
	Report in 1974	
Report in 1976 was:		
Accurate	91.1	47.8
Inaccurate	8.9	52.2
	100	100
	(924)	(159)
	Report in 1972	
Report in 1976 was:		
Accurate	91.2	59.3
Inaccurate	8.8	40.7
	100	100
	(833)	(221)

NOTE.—This table uses the unweighted cases from the 1972–74–76 panel for which complete validation data are available. Numbers in parentheses are *N*'s.

answer is not possible, as we do not have independent measures of education or interest against which to validate self-reports. We do, however, have measures of political information, which are substantially correlated with education and interest but which, unlike reports of behaviors and background characteristics, cannot be faked. Finding that the information level of vote misreporters is low would indirectly cast some doubt on their education and interest claims. On the other hand, finding that misreporters' knowledge is high would be consistent with their reports of education and interest.

Table 3 shows the answers of the different groups of respondents to two questions about the House of Representatives. Knowledge is

Table 3. Vote Report Status by Two Measures of Political Information

		Percentage Who Knew Which Party Controlled the House before the 1976 Elections	Percentage Who Knew Which Party Elected the Most Members to the House in the 1976 Elections
Reported accurately for all three elections:			
Never voted	(*N* = 139)	36.0	37.4
Voted once	(*N* = 53)	54.7	56.6
Voted twice	(*N* = 82)	65.9	58.5
Voted three times	(*N* = 406)	77.6	73.1
Reported inaccurately:			
Three overreports	(*N* = 64)	73.4	64.1
Two overreports	(*N* = 69)	79.7	64.7
One overreport	(*N* = 174)	66.1	65.5
Underreported	(*N* = 31)	48.4	38.7

NOTE.—The questions asked were: "Do you happen to know which party had the most members in the House of Representatives in Washington before the elections (this/last) month?" (If necessary: "Which one?") and "Do you happen to know which party elected the most members to the House of Representatives in the election (this/last) month?" (If necessary: "Which one?") The entries are based on the unweighted cases from the 1972–74–76 panel for which complete validation data are available.

monotonically related to voting frequency, but only for those who report accurately about their turnout. Those who overreport voting show no such relation, and their overall level of knowledge is much higher than that of other nonvoters. In fact, these misreporters are about as informed as validated voters, casting at least some doubt on the hypothesis that they reported inaccurately about their education or interest.

The finding that misreporters do not usually vote raises the possibility that misreporting may affect conclusions about the forces that promote turnout. To address this issue, we constructed two measures of voting frequency. In the first version, self-reported instances of voting were summed across the three elections to form an index ranging from 0 to 3 votes cast. In the second version, an equivalent index was constructed based upon validated votes. Among respondents for whom there was complete information for all three elections, 65.9 percent reported their behavior accurately. About one in six respondents (16.8 percent) reported voting once more than they actually did; another 6.8 percent reported voting twice more than the records indicated; and 5.2 percent reported voting three times when a check of the records showed that they had never voted. As is usually the case in studies of this kind, there was also a small number of respondents (5.3 percent) who reported they had voted less often than shown in the records; most of them voted in all three elections but claimed they had voted only twice.

To analyze the effects of misreporting on the correlates of turnout frequency, the same regression model was estimated for the two different versions of the voting variable. The model predicts voting frequency in terms of respondents' education, household income, score on a three-item efficacy index, and response to an item on interest in public affairs, all measured in 1972.

Table 4 shows that the regression results differ, depending on which version of the dependent variable is used. All four predictors contribute independently to the explanation of self-reported voting. Together these variables explain 18 percent of the variance in self-reported voting frequency across the 1972, 1974, and 1976 elections. By contrast, the same variables explain only about half as much variance in validated voting frequency; and, controlling for income and interest, education and efficacy are not significantly related to turnout in this equation. Although the efficacy difference is best treated as a chance fluctuation, the difference between the education effects exceeds twice its standard error.[2] Thus, misreporting distorts conclusions about the

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[2] The significantly larger overall R^2 in the self-reported regression is not due to there being more variation in that measure, as it is the validated measure that has the larger variance.

Table 4. Validated versus Self-reported Dependent Variables in a Regression Model of Voting Frequency across the 1972, 1974, and 1976 Elections

	Self-reported Voting Frequency			Validated Voting Frequency		
	b	beta	*t*	b	beta	*t*
Interest in public affairs	.26	.22	7.20[a]	.21	.16	4.92[a]
Efficacy	.05	.08	2.53[b]	.04	.05	1.60
Income	.04	.16	4.86[a]	.06	.22	6.75[a]
Education	.01	.12	3.65[a]	−.00	−.00	0.10
		$R^2 = .18$	$N = 1,000$		$R^2 = .10$	$N = 1,000$

NOTE.—Both regressions use the unweighted cases from the 1972–74–76 panel for which complete validation data are available.

[a] $p < .001$.

[b] $p < .05$.

determinants of voting frequency in the 1972, 1974, and 1976 elections.[3]

These regressions involve a dependent variable that sums across three elections. Thus, it is important to determine whether the distortion in the self-reported regression is due to cumulating errors across reports or whether the distortion occurs in analyses of a single election as well.

To do so, we ran parallel regressions predicting turnout among the 1972–74–76 panel respondents for just the 1976 election. The results are very similar to those in table 4. All four predictors are significantly related to self-reported 1976 turnout, accounting for 16 percent of the variance. By contrast, controlling for the other variables, education is not significantly related to validated 1976 voting, efficacy reaches borderline significance ($p = .06$), and altogether, only 8 percent of the variance is explained.[4]

Discussion

Education has an independent effect on self-reported voting in the model estimated in table 4 only because it is related to misreporting; it has no independent effect on validated voting. This finding is consistent with others showing that misreporting leads to inflated estimates of the association between voting and variables like education and interest (e.g., Hill and Hurley 1984; Presser 1984a; and Silver, Anderson, and Abramson 1986).[5] The better educated and more interested may feel more pressure to misreport because their naive theories about politics tell them that they are the kinds of people who vote (or, alternatively, ought to vote).

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[3] Strictly speaking, ordered probit analysis is more appropriate than ordinary least squares (OLS) for a dependent variable distributed like our turnout measure. We estimated an ordered probit model and obtained exactly the same patterns as from the OLS: with the self-reported data, all four variables show significant effects, whereas with the validated data, the education coefficient is essentially zero and the efficacy coefficient attains borderline significance ($p = .10$). We present the OLS results in the table because the coefficients have a more familiar interpretation than those from the ordered probit.

[4] A reader of an earlier draft asked whether the inclusion in the model of either race or age would affect the table 4 results. Controlling for the other variables, race does not attain statistical significance in either the self-reported or the validated regressions. Age, by contrast, is a significant predictor of turnout in both regressions. Moreover, when age is included, the education coefficient becomes significant ($p < .02$) in the validated regression. However, the difference between the education coefficients in the two equations that include age again exceeds twice its standard error. Although in this case the measurement error still affects conclusions about turnout, the results show that the impact of the error may vary depending on the particular variables included in the model.

[5] Most of the literature focuses on the effects of misreporting on models of turnout. The few studies that have examined the impact on vote choice find a small bandwagon effect; i.e., misreporters are more likely to claim to have voted for the winner. See, e.g., Traugott and Katosh (1979).

This kind of effect may systematically distort survey research findings. Social scientists use surveys to build models of how the world operates. But survey respondents have their own models about the way the world works, and these models can affect the answers they provide. Thus, relying on self-reports may bias survey results in favor of commonsense models of the world.

Precisely this seems to have occurred in a study by Hessing, Elffers, and Weigel (1988). They found that self-reports of tax evasion were lower among those who expressed a negative attitude about such behavior, who perceived evasion as infrequent and not tolerated among significant others, and whose estimates of the consequences of such behavior were severe, all in line with commonsense expectations. But none of these variables was in fact related to actual evasion as measured by tax agency audits of the same individuals.

Surveys about subject matters that are seen as socially desirable or undesirable are probably particularly susceptible to this kind of bias. Increased attention to systematic measurement error in these contexts not only should improve our understanding of its extent and nature but also should provide clues as to how to redesign our data collection procedures to reduce it.

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WANTED: THE EDUCATION PRESIDENT

ISSUE TRESPASSING BY POLITICAL CANDIDATES

HELMUT NORPOTH
BRUCE BUCHANAN

Abstract The strategy of ambiguity counsels candidates for office to take up some policy positions in the territory of the opposing party. In 1988, both presidential candidates took some positions of that kind: George Bush with promises on jobs and education, and Michael Dukakis on defense. This article examines (1) how aware voters were of those incidents of "issue trespassing"; (2) whether attention to the electoral campaign helped voters become more aware; and (3) the electoral payoff of the strategy. Our findings raise serious doubts that "issue trespassing" pays electoral dividends. Voters tend to rely too much on party stereotypes to notice such attempts, and attention to the campaign does little to mitigate that tendency in two of the three instances being examined.

> Each party casts some policies into the other's territory in order to convince voters there that its net position is near them. [ANTHONY DOWNS, 1957]

Candidates for office are often advised to be as ambiguous as possible in their appeal for electoral support by being fuzzy on controversial issues, skirting them altogether, or by offering a scattering of different policies. Such maneuvers are believed to expand the range of voters to which a candidate may appeal. The candidate who can negotiate

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:87–99 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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the required maneuvers most skillfully is likely to triumph. But as an electoral strategy, ambiguity is not without perils. It does make it more difficult for the voter, stranded in a fog of confusion, to behave rationally. The people's electoral verdict, in V. O. Key's (1966, p. 2) memorable saying, is nothing but an "echo chamber [that] bears an inevitable and invariable relation to the input." Many would readily endorse the warning that "ambiguity is harmful to the workings of electoral democracy" (Page 1978, p. 191).

For the candidates themselves, the most dreaded peril is the possibility that ambiguity is not the winning strategy. Under certain circumstances, namely, when preferences are not very intense and voters are risk-averse, ambiguity may actually diminish rather than enhance a candidate's appeal (Shepsle 1972). In addition to the voters' own preferences, much would also depend on the perceptions that they form of the candidates. Perhaps voters are too confused to be able to make any attribution and ignore the ambiguous issues altogether. Alternatively, they may lose faith in a candidate whom they cannot locate precisely on important issues. Or else, voters may wind up with perceptions that put the ambiguous candidate at a distinct disadvantage. Determining how that could happen is the intent of this article.

The strategy of ambiguity, according to Downs (1957, pp. 135–36), calls for the candidate of one party to "cast some policies into the other's territory" in order to spread out the candidate's overall position in the policy space. In other words, a Democratic candidate would offer some Republican policy stands and a Republican candidate some Democratic stands. In the 1988 presidential election, both candidates engaged in what we call "issue trespassing": George Bush with his pledge to "create 30 million more jobs" and to become the "education president," and Michael Dukakis with his pledge, presented in a series of well-publicized speeches, to bolster the nation's conventional defense (Rosenthal 1988). Jobs and education belong to the issue domain "owned" by the Democrats whereas defense belongs to that of the Republican party. In making their claims on those issues, both candidates thus temporarily donned the colors of the opposite party. That is not to say that either Bush or Dukakis were pretending to favor policies they opposed deep down just to gain votes. There is no evidence to doubt the sincerity of their commitment to the respective issues, but it seems unlikely that they would have raised them if voter opinion had been unfavorable.

In this article we address the following questions: (1) To what extent did voters notice the candidates' acts of trespassing? (2) Did attention to the electoral campaign make voters more likely to notice them? (3) What were the electoral consequences for a candidate making a promise that crossed into the opponent's party territory? In short, did that move enhance the candidate's electoral support? We examine these questions with data from a national probability sample of 1,875 adults interviewed by telephone October 14–November 4, 1988. Bruce Buchanan designed the questionnaire, and Louis Harris and Associates conducted the field work.[1]

Sorting Out Candidate Stands

Survey evidence, in general, has not been kind to the view of the voter as someone who is well informed about candidate positions on specific policies (Campbell et al. 1960). But no matter how ill-prepared and inattentive, many citizens nonetheless will venture some opinion on where candidates stand on policy issues (Markus 1982). A common temptation is to infer that the more preferred candidate (or party) shares the voter's own position on the issue. Numerous studies have documented such a "projection" effect (Brody and Page 1972; Markus and Converse 1979). The ambiguity of candidates in their policy appeals is widely seen as a major reason why voters find it easy to perform these leaps of inference (Page 1978, pp. 184–87). Yet the ability to project requires that the voter cares enough about the issue to have a viewpoint of his or her own. For a good number of voters that is a dubious assumption.

For voters in need of help with the chore of sorting out candidate positions, the most facile clue is certainly the candidate's partisanship. That Bush is a Republican and Dukakis a Democrat is probably one of the few sets of information in the mass public that one can take for granted, at least for the duration of the general election campaign. Armed with that information, voters can now avail themselves of partisan images, or what some call "schemata" or "stereotypes," and apply them to the specific candidates running for the presidency in an election year. Take national defense as an example. If doing more on defense is seen as a Republican stand, then voters might simply infer that the party's presidential candidate is taking it as well. The syllogism they employ would be: Bush is a Republican; the Republican party is the one in favor of a stronger defense; thus Bush must be in favor of a stronger defense. Once a party image on a given issue is ingrained in the public's mind, it does not take much to activate it for the purpose of sorting out specific candidates.

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[1] The survey of 1,875 respondents of voting age was chosen by means of random digit dialing throughout the United States. Up to four attempts were made to reach an adult at a telephone number initially selected; then the number was replaced by another. Within a sample household being contacted, one of the adults residing in it was randomly selected for an interview. No refusal or other response rate information is available. The sample has been weighted to adjust for variations in region, age, race, and sex of respondents.

Some party images have etched themselves deeply in the political attitudes of the American electorate. "Questions having to do with governmental underwriting of medical costs, aid to education, guaranteed employment . . . all revealed tendencies to link the Democratic Party with the New Deal position" (Campbell et al. 1960, p. 184). Partisan "schemata" appear to help a large number of voters handle a wide range of political issues (Brady and Sniderman 1985; Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985). That voters tend to appraise presidential candidates in light of such images has been vividly demonstrated in the case of Jimmy Carter. Little known in early 1976, Carter came to be perceived as taking the typical Democratic stands, once he gained his party's nomination for the presidency (Conover and Feldman 1989, p. 936; also, Granberg 1985). Experimental studies confirm the influence of party stereotyping on the perceptions of candidate's issue stands (Stroh 1990).

Such partisan inferencing need not be a bad bargain for voters seeking to buy political information at low cost. To the extent that candidates prove faithful to the expectations engendered by generalized party images, voters may be well served. But this reliance may have unexpected costs when candidates deviate from partisan expectations and pursue a strategy of ambiguity. When the Democrat takes a position commonly associated with the Republican party or vice versa, voters may be more inclined to stick with their party images instead of picking up the candidate's new looks.

Attributions of Issues to Bush and Dukakis

Our study surveyed popular perceptions of George Bush and Michael Dukakis on a large number of issues where they made specific claims to the electorate in 1988. In order to be able to ascertain the accuracy of voter perceptions, we relied, in the wording of the questions, as much as possible on the phrases coined by the candidates themselves. To be sure, voters proved able by varying pluralities to identify the correct candidate for many issue stands like capital punishment, gun control, or health insurance. What was the response to the items where the candidate crossed into the other party's territory?[2]

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[2] The wording of those questions was as follows: "Now I am going to ask you some questions about the stand the candidates have taken on issues. Sometimes the candidates make their stands clear and sometimes they don't. Now as far as you are concerned, which candidate has called for creating 30 million more jobs? Has said he wants to be known as the 'Education President?' Favors making a buildup of conventional forces the top defense priority?" Altogether, respondents were queried about 20 such issues.

Table 1. Familiarity with Unfamiliar Candidate Claims (Percent)

Attributed To	"30 Million More Jobs"	"Education President"	"Conventional Defense"
Bush	29	25	50
Dukakis	45	44	24
Both/neither	6	2	1
Not sure	20	29	25
Total	100	100	100

NOTE.—N = 1,875.

As table 1 shows, most respondents thought it was Dukakis, not Bush, who promised to be the "education president" and to create "30 million more jobs." Likewise, most thought it was Bush, not Dukakis, who favored making a build-up of conventional forces the top defense priority. The differences between the Bush and Dukakis figures are too large to be dismissed as sampling error. By a substantial margin, people erred in their perceptions of which candidate made those claims.

It is apparent that the errors exhibit a partisan bias. It was Dukakis who got the nod on the questions dealing with jobs and education, two Democratic issues, whereas Bush was the one picked for defense, a Republican issue. Many voters quite obviously did not catch which candidate it was who wanted to create "30 million more jobs" and be the "education president," but they were quite prepared to say it was Dukakis. Their premise seemed to be that if the issue is jobs or education, it "must" be the Democratic candidate who is making specific proposals to deal with it. Likewise, if the issue is defense, it "must" be the Republican candidate who proposes to do more.

We suspect that to the extent that voters prove reasonably familiar with candidate stands (on capital punishment, school prayer, national health insurance, or developments of new nuclear missiles) they do so largely because those stands accord with familiar party images. Whenever Bush or Dukakis adhered to those images, most voters made the right inference. But when one of them deviated, many voters were led to the wrong inference by relying on party stereotyping. Apparently, short-term claims by candidates fail to erase more long-term images about the parties in case of a conflict. Our survey-based finding dovetails with experimental evidence on stereotyping in candidate perceptions (Lodge and Hamill 1986, p. 518).

The imprint of party on those candidate perceptions is visible in yet

Table 2. Party Identification and Issue Attribution: Percent Naming Dukakis Minus Percent Naming Bush

Party Identification	"30 Million More Jobs"	"Education President"	"Conventional Defense"
Democrat	+32	+25	−19
Independent	+11	+17	−17
Republican	+9	+2	−17
χ^2	27.2	24.6	1.1
p	<.01	<.01	>.50

another way. As table 2 shows, a respondent's own party identification swayed candidate perceptions on jobs and education to a considerable degree.[3] Democrats were far more inclined to give Dukakis the nod than were Republicans or Independents. Yet this pattern does not emerge for defense. Why not for this issue? The reason may be that doing more for defense (conventional or nuclear) is not a matter of consensus, as doing more for jobs and education seems to be. Thus a Democrat personally opposed to a defense buildup and not quite sure which candidate made the specific pledge on defense would not instinctively pick Dukakis on this issue.

But whenever a policy carries little controversy, voters may feel little inhibition to follow their own partisan instinct in aligning candidates with policies. Dukakis's lead on the jobs and education items, to some extent, reflects the continuing, though declining, advantage held by the Democrats over the Republicans in party identification; in the 1988 survey Democrats outnumbered Republicans by a four to three margin. For some voters the process of candidate perception may boil down to attributing a favorable stand to the candidate of their own party. It is partisan affect that propels their inferential leap. Among Democrats, partisan feelings magnified the party stereotyping effect whereas they counteracted it among Republicans, giving Bush at least a respectable share of attributions regarding the issues of jobs and education. Alternatively, it might be argued that Republicans were simply more alert to candidate stands than were Democrats. There is a trace of evidence to support this hypothesis. Republicans edged Democrats by 4 percentage points, on average, in matching the candidates with 20 issue stands examined in our survey. But that still leaves enough room for partisan affect to sway voter perceptions of candidate stands.

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[3] The χ^2 results reported in table 2 test the hypothesis that there is no relationship in a 3 × 2 table between party identification (three categories) and issue attribution to Bush or Dukakis (two categories).

Attention to the Campaign and Issue Attributions

One would expect that voters paying close attention to the campaign would be more likely to discern the actual positions taken by the respective candidates than voters who do not. In one sense, table 3 supports this expectation for each of the three "trespassing" issues. The more closely people said they followed the campaign, the higher was the percentage of those recognizing that Bush made the respective pledges on jobs and education, and Dukakis on defense. Admittedly, the rise was not dramatic, saying little for either the quality of campaign coverage in the media or the attention span of even the most attentive stratum of the electorate. Among respondents in the top quarter of campaign attention, barely one in three was aware that Bush made the claims about jobs and education while less than half was aware of Dukakis's commitment to conventional defense. Still, increased exposure helped respondents pick the right candidate for a given issue.

At the same time, one would also expect that the incidence of wrong perceptions diminished with campaign attention. But that is by no means the case. As one moves, in table 3, from following the campaign not closely at all to somewhat closely for a given issue, the percentage of respondents picking the wrong candidate fails to decline. On the contrary, it rises. In other words, as voters followed the campaign more closely, they were both more likely to get the candidate promises right and to get them wrong.

This perplexing combination is made possible by the large variation of the "not sure" response. What changes most dramatically with campaign attention is the proportion of respondents saying they are not sure whether Bush or Dukakis made a given claim. Among those following the campaign not closely at all, "not sure" was almost the most common response whereas it was a rare one among those following it very closely. It appears as if a high level of campaign attention instills a false sense of confidence in voters. A person might reason that "the more I watch/read about the campaign, the more I should know about the candidates." For those who say they follow politics closely, it is certainly more embarrassing to admit ignorance than for

Table 3. Campaign Exposure and Issue Attribution

	Following Campaign			
Issue/Attributed To	Not at All	Not Very Closely	Somewhat Closely	Very Closely
"30 million more jobs":[a]				
Dukakis	43	48	50	49
Bush	24	28	30	34
Both/neither	3	3	4	5
Not sure	30	21	16	12
Total	100	100	100	100
"Education president":[b]				
Dukakis	35	45	47	44
Bush	25	25	29	34
Both/neither	1	3	3	3
Not sure	39	27	21	19
Total	100	100	100	100
"Conventional defense":[c]				
Dukakis	17	21	29	45
Bush	41	49	54	40
Both/neither	1	2	0	2
Not sure	42	28	16	14
Total	101	100	99	101
N	206	387	799	471

[a] χ^2 (Dukakis vs. Bush) = 2.5; $p > .30$; $df = 3$.
[b] χ^2 (Dukakis vs. Bush) = 4.0; $p > .20$; $df = 3$.
[c] χ^2 (Dukakis vs. Bush) = 50.8; $p < .001$; $df = 3$.

those who could not care less. So they are more willing to take a chance and wind up getting things more often wrong as well as right than do the less involved. Yet, if they were simply guessing, they should divide equally between the two alternatives. They do not. Even the more attentive respondents tend to pick the wrong candidate more often than the correct one. There is no lessening of party stereotyping with campaign attention. Indeed, some studies suggest that we should expect this tendency to increase with sophistication (Lodge and Hamill 1986, p. 517).

The findings reported in table 3 for the items of jobs and education show that the gap between incorrect and correct responses widens at intermediate levels of campaign exposure but then narrows among respondents at the top level. This would indicate that party stereotyping actually increases with moderate campaign attention but may be counteracted by accurate perceptions when people pay enough attention. The pattern in the data, however, is more suggestive than conclusive. For the jobs and education issues, the relationship between campaign exposure and candidate perceptions is statistically not significant.[4]

The defense issue, on the other hand, revealed a sharp and highly significant improvement in candidate perceptions with campaign attention. In this case, people following the campaign very closely caught something linking Dukakis with conventional defense. What may have provided them with a clue about Dukakis on this particular issue that eluded them about Bush regarding jobs and education? We are not sure about the answer. Could it possibly have something to do with that ludicrous television commercial showing Dukakis riding in a tank? If so, our finding would confirm the thesis of Patterson and McClure (1976) about the effectiveness of campaign commercials, though with a heavy twist of irony. After all, the "Dukakis-tank" commercial was run by the opposing side aiming to ridicule Dukakis's claims on defense. It is even conceivable that the commercial may have benefited Dukakis, however unintentionally, by counteracting the party stereotyping effect on the defense issue, which favored the Republicans. Without the commercial, even many of the more attentive voters would have simply inferred that it was Bush who favored doing more on conventional defense.

From Perceptions to Decisions

The findings on perceptions thus far are not encouraging for trespassing candidates. Too many voters are unaware of the candidates' attempts to stake the respective positions. That, by itself, need not prevent an issue from impinging on a voter's decision. Faulty perceptions, if accompanied by intense concern over the issue, may sway a voter to support the candidate seen as the advocate, whether or not the perception is correct. In many instances, of course, flawed perceptions signal unfamiliarity and unconcern with the issue in question. We suspect that most voters getting the candidates wrong on a given issue never give much thought to those issues in pondering their vote decision.

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[4] The χ^2 results reported in table 3 test the hypothesis that there is no relationship in a 4 × 2 table between campaign attention (four categories) and issue attribution to Bush or Dukakis (two categories).

On the other hand, mistaken candidate perceptions on issues may have electoral consequences if the issue is salient and voter opinion on it intense enough. True, under those conditions it may be rare for voters to be mistaken in their candidate perceptions but, as our survey showed, it is not impossible. On such nontrivial matters as jobs, education, and defense, more voters were mistaken than correct in their candidate assessments.

Even then, however, such assessments may not sway the voting decision of many voters. A Democrat might vote for Dukakis regardless of attributing certain promises on education and jobs to him. The more telling case is that of Republicans and Independents who held those views. Were they more inclined to vote for Dukakis when they believed, however mistakenly, that it was Dukakis who made the promises on jobs and education than when they believed it was Bush?

The answer, according to figure 1, is yes. The percentage of Republicans and Independents who voted for Dukakis was roughly 10 points higher among those who (erroneously) credited Dukakis with the "education" pledge than among those who (correctly) thought it was Bush; those who said they were not sure fell somewhere between those percentages.[5] These differences are statistically significant at the .01 level (with a χ^2 of 12.2 and 2 *df*). The finding for "jobs" is highly similar (with a χ^2 of 18.6). In other words, issue misattributions had electoral consequences.

It might be argued, however, that Bush's promises regarding the issues of education and jobs had little to do with this. Simply by following their party stereotypes on those issues, voters would have wound up voting for Dukakis, no matter what the Republican candidate said and whether or not voters grasped the message. We cannot rule out this possibility entirely, but it seems unlikely that voters rely on such stereotypes without some prompting or prodding by the candidates. Had Bush said nothing about jobs or education, fewer voters probably would have been inclined to weigh those issues in their vote calculus. Staking out claims in the policy territory of the other party carried the risk of alerting voters to concerns associated with the party of one's opponent.

Dukakis, in turn, faced a similar prospect over the issue of conventional defense where most respondents attributed the promise to strengthen it to Bush. Now our interest focuses on Democrats and Independents in the electorate as the critical group where perceptions

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[5] The vote variable in this analysis is the respondent's vote intention, recorded in the period of October 18–November 4; since the survey was conducted entirely before the election, no report of vote decision is available. But the split of vote intentions in the survey (53–47 in favor of Bush) matches the actual voting results so closely that using vote intentions in place of vote decisions seems justifiable.

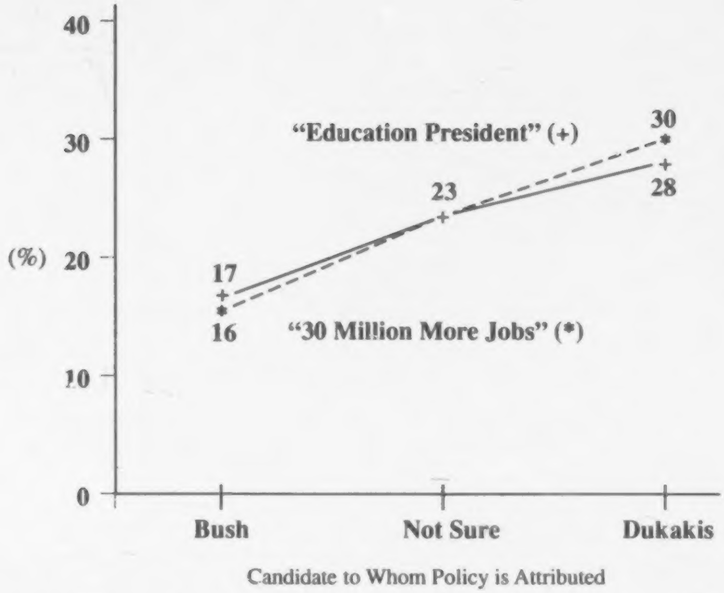

Figure 1. Dukakis vote share among Republicans and Independents by policy attribution.

on this item might be expected to cut. Indeed, voters of that ilk believing (erroneously) that it was Bush who promised a strengthening of conventional defense proved more likely to vote for him (41 percent) than were those who thought it was Dukakis (35 percent); while "not sure" respondents fell again in between (38 percent). But these differences are too small to be statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 3.6$, 2 *df*). In other words, misattributions concerning the defense issue were electorally harmless.

One reason why perceptions on the defense item made little or no difference for vote choices may have been that voters themselves were not in favor of the policy alternative. Seeing Bush as the candidate favoring a stronger conventional defense may have done little to prompt a Democrat or Independent opposed to such a buildup to vote Republican in 1988. In contrast, when the policy alternative is invariably positive, the candidate getting the voter's nod on that issue also improves his chances of getting that voter's voting support even though the perception is mistaken. Our findings suggest such an effect for the issues of jobs and education. To be sure, the effects are not overwhelming. Most partisans still supported their party's candidate even when they saw the other one taking a desirable position, but their support was less dependable in those instances.

It may seem ironic that it was the winner of the 1988 election, not the loser, who suffered more from mistaken candidate perceptions. At the same time, those misperceptions did not carry enough weight to put Bush's victory in jeopardy. In the end far more Democrats defected to Bush than did Republicans to Dukakis. (For an insightful analysis of those determinants, see Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde [1990].) Issue misattribution, if anything, may have given Dukakis a better shot at Bush than he would have had otherwise.

Conclusion

In promising to create "30 million more jobs" and to be the "education president," George Bush raised issues commonly associated with the Democratic party. If that was an effort to aim for voters beyond his partisan perimeters, it failed. The reason was not that voters, though catching the message, disbelieved the messenger as not quite sincere. Rather, it was a case of voters mistaking the messenger, with most of them identifying Dukakis rather than Bush as the candidate who made those jobs and education pledges. No doubt, being a Democrat, Dukakis could have made the specific pledges on jobs and education too. Indeed, Dukakis raised the issues of jobs and education during the 1988 campaign. In naming him, however, for the "30 million more jobs" and "education president" claims, voters were letting on that they were making a partisan inference, however reasonable, rather than showing off what they might have learned about the candidates from the campaign.

Our findings raise doubts about whether candidates for office are well advised to pursue a strategy of ambiguity by trespassing on the issue territory of the other party. Such a strategy runs the risk of raising issues where familiar party images strongly favor the opposing party. At best, voters may simply ignore the issue; at worst, they may vote for the opponent. Given the electorate's limited attention span and reliance on familiar rules of thumb, candidates would seem to fare better by activating and reinforcing old wisdoms than by promoting new ideas.

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THE POLLS—A REPORT

SECURITY AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES IN ISRAEL: 1986–1991

ASHER ARIAN

It is a truism that Israeli public life has been characterized for the past 2 decades by a near-even split between a more militant and a more conciliatory stand on the political and security issues related to the territories under Israel's control since the 1967 Six Days War (Shamir 1986; Yishai 1987). But it is equally true that support for the more dovish positions has been growing over the past years (see Arian et al. 1988; Arian 1989). The Gulf War furthered this creeping conciliation.

In the period studied (see App.), the Israeli public saw the possibility for peace (or the absence of war) grow as the years went by (see table 1 and fig. 1). If peace was increasingly possible, it was not because the perception of the aspirations of the Arabs moderated. The samples were asked about the aspirations of the Arabs toward Israel; in 1991, half the sample said they thought that ultimately the Arabs wanted to destroy Israel and kill the Jews (see table 2). Yet, when forced to choose between initiating peace talks and strengthening military capacity (table 3), 74 percent in 1991 chose peace talks.

I. Change

The pattern of incremental growth of responses that can be considered moderate was constant and has also been found based on analysis of panel data (Arian, Shamir, and Ventura 1992). The issues considered were the solutions regarding the future of the territories (see tables, Sec. B) and negotiations with the PLO and the establishment of a Palestinian state (see tables, Sec. C).

SOLUTIONS

There was a steady increase in the percent prepared to give up the territories for a peace treaty with appropriate security arrangements

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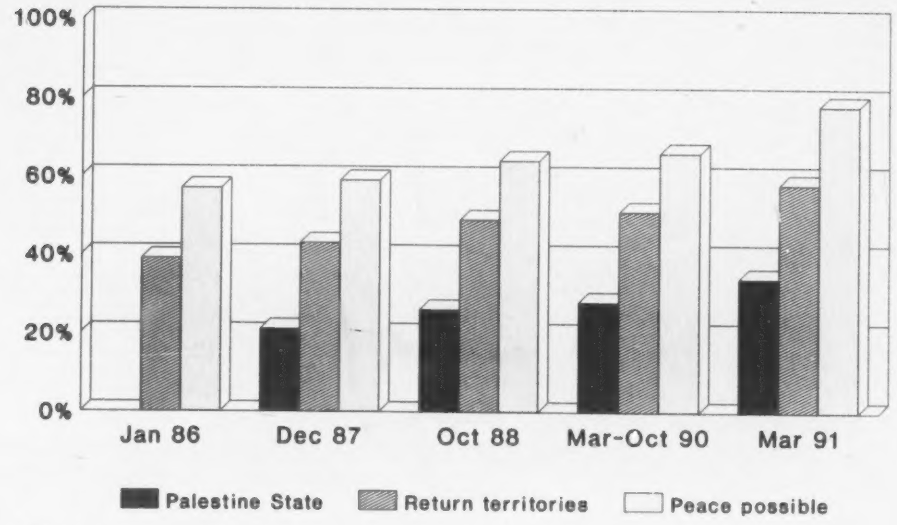

Displayed: A and B of Tables 1, 5, and 11.

Figure 1. Attitudes in Israel, 1986–1991

(Katz 1989; also see fig. 1). The population remained split, and the political system was unable to solve the problem decisively one way or the other, but the shift in public opinion was important, and it is likely that this gradual transformation will have an impact on policy and policymakers in the long run.

The smooth swell of the response rate observed in figure 1 hides the fluctuations within periods. For example, 54 percent of the interviews of the 1990 survey were conducted before August 2, the day of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and 46 percent after that date. Before the invasion, 57 percent supported returning the territories; after the invasion, support for return fell back to 50 percent. For a special supplementary sample of 119 Jewish residents living in the territories, support for returning the territories was predictably lower, accounting for 28 percent of that sample.

The annexation of the territories and the transfer of Arabs from these territories are two of the most contentious proposals in Israeli politics. Were the territories annexed to Israel, 55 percent in 1991 said they would favor increasing the rights of Arabs in the territories (most of them without extending voting rights to them), and 18 percent would support decreasing their civil rights (see table 6). Some two-thirds of the samples favored encouragement of Arabs to leave the country (see table 7).

About 40 percent were for transfer (not shown) and annexation each. The overlap between the two, however, was partial; the correlation between supporting transfer and supporting annexation was .38.

THE PLO AND A PALESTINIAN STATE

One very emotional issue in Israeli politics has been the proposal to carry on negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, which has been branded as a terrorist organization by the government; it is a crime for an Israeli citizen knowingly to have contact with a member of the organization. Still, there is strong evidence that the moderating trend in Israeli public opinion extends to this topic as well (see fig. 1). The New York Times (Brinkley 1989) reported the time series generated by Hanoch Smith showing that the acceptability of negotiations with the PLO, if it officially recognized Israel and ceased terrorist activity, moved from 43 percent in April 1987, through 53 percent in August 1988, to 58 percent in March 1989.

In 1991, after the war, the rate of those supporting negotiations with the PLO fell. This rate was below the pre-intifada uprising (before 1987) rate and is not surprising, considering that the PLO openly sided with Saddam Hussein and Iraq in the war. When confronted with a series of conditions in 1991, about half of the sample agreed to negotiations with the PLO; 51 percent persisted in their opposition regardless of the conditions described (see tables 8–10).

If the Palestine Liberation Organization had its support lowered as a result of the war, support for a major goal of the organization—establishing a Palestinian state—gained in favor. The rate of support generated was much lower, but the growth was steady and uniform and was not interrupted by the war (see fig. 1 and table 11).

In the period studied, support for the idea gradually increased. Strong opposition to the notion of a Palestinian state, although still the largest category, wavered over time. The increase in support of a Palestinian state was striking because the Likud and Labor, Israel's largest parties, both spurned the idea. In the 1990 sample, which extended between March and October, support for the proposition of establishing a Palestinian state was slightly higher before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2 than after the invasion. The overwhelming majority of the settlers (83 percent) rejected the idea of creating such a state.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The orientation of the public to the topic of nonconventional weapons, and especially nuclear ones, was markedly affected by the war (see tables 12–13). There are three pieces of evidence of this shift: the change over time in the position of the public regarding the development and use of nuclear weapons; the attitudes expressed regarding arms control and limitation; and the threat posed by such weapons.

Support for developing nuclear capacity rose from 78 percent in 1987 to 91 percent in 1991. Tolerating use of nuclear arms went up dramatically: to 88 percent in 1991, from 53 percent in 1987 and 1988 and from 36 percent in 1986.

Most Israelis perceived the use of nuclear weapons as appropriate as a tactic of last resort after an atomic attack by another country or following a chemical or biological attack (not shown). At a lower rate, about half the sample supported nuclear weapons use in a desperate situation or in order to save a large number of Israeli lives. At a much lower level was the support for using these weapons to save a small number of lives or in place of a conventional army. This order was the same as 1986 and 1987, except that by 1991 the threshold of opposition to nuclear use had been lowered considerably.

Israelis liked the idea of arms control regarding nonconventional weapons, but much less so regarding conventional armies. Israelis were willing to abandon all nonconventional weapons if the other countries of the region did (75 percent). More (79 percent) were willing to give up chemical and biological nonconventional weapons (but not nuclear) if the other nations relinquished all of their nonconventional weapons (including nuclear ones).

On other arms control proposals, Israelis were less enthusiastic. Sixty-four percent supported preventing all outside arms supply to nations of the region. Sixty percent promoted enlarging demilitarized areas, but only 54 percent backed the plan to reduce the size of armies in the area.

The nuclear issue crystallized during the Gulf War. It represented the major threat expressed by the public (not shown), and support for development and use grew. The conditions for use seemed to be clarified in the Israeli mind.

II. The Gulf War

Israelis' opinions of the United States improved dramatically after the war (see tables, Sec. E); the evaluation of Arabs (Israeli citizens, territories residents, and Arabs in general) deteriorated in a striking manner (see table 4). Israelis continued to believe in their ability to overcome, and in the country's deterrent capability; their expressed desire to live in Israel grew (not shown). In general, the sample felt that the country was ready for the situations faced as a result of the war (see tables, Sec. F). Over time, the belief in the importance of God in national security issues also increased a bit (tables, Sec. G).

The Israeli public is very sensitive to political and international developments (Gutman 1978; Stone 1982). Twenty-nine percent of Israelis said that the war influenced their security and political opinions (not shown). The net effect of the change, however, was little, since half of those who reported that they changed said that they were more ready for compromise regarding the territories than before the war, but the other half said that they were less ready than before for compromise. Moreover, 29 percent said that their attitude regarding the territories had changed due to the war; of those who reported change, 17 percent said they now thought the territories were more important to Israel's security, and 12 percent were convinced by the war that the territories were less important than they thought before.

The polarization of the system increased, as seen when change was analyzed by vote intention (see tables, Sec. H). The more extreme the party of choice, the more likely one was to report change in the direction of the pole of the party. That is, those with a left-leaning orientation were more likely to report change in attitude as a result of the war, and that change was most likely to be in a conciliatory direction. Respondents on the right similarly changed but changed to even more militant positions. For example, for the leftist Ratz, the ratio of change to a more moderate position compared to a more militant position as a result of the war was 12:1. For every voter of the rightist Moledet who reported change in a moderate direction in the wake of the war, two voters of that party said that their attitudes hardened on security and political matters as a result of the war. Labor voters who changed moved in a more conciliatory direction at a rate of 2:1.

Two groups changed in a relatively balanced manner; that is, the size of the group reporting attitudes becoming more conciliatory as a result of the war was balanced in number by those reporting that they became more militant. The two groups were Likud voters and the undecided. These are the two largest groups in the analysis (Likud 36 percent; undecided 20 percent). Their decisions and the complexity of their patterns will likely have an important impact on the future of Israeli politics.

Polarization was also evident regarding the perceived importance of territories for Israel's security. The missiles fired from Iraq reinforced the belief for voters of the right that territories were important and did the opposite for voters of the left (see table 29). Voters for religious parties generated a pattern similar to the Likud and right voters, as did those who had not yet decided about their vote.

Appendix

The Samples

Surveys reported in this article were made up of representative samples of the adult Jewish population of Israel. The dates of the surveys were (1) January

1986; (2) December 9, 1987–January 4, 1988; (3) October 1988; (4) March–October 1990; and (5) March 16–31, 1991. Sample sizes were 1,172 in 1986; 1,116 in 1987; 873 in 1988; 1,251 in 1990; and 1,131 in 1991.

The 1990 survey was conducted as part of a panel design in which respondents from the 1987 and 1988 samples were reinterviewed (Arian, Shamir, and Ventura 1991). The interview period stretched out for a number of months in order to achieve a national sample with a maximum number of reinterviews. An unanticipated consequence of this protracted period was that 54 percent of the interviews for the 1990 sample were conducted before August 2, the day of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and 46 percent afterward.

Samples generally did not include individuals from kibbutzim or from the territories, with the exception of the 1990 survey, which included a special supplementary sample of 119 West Bank residents.

Questionnaires were composed and data analyzed by me, under the auspices of the National Security and Public Opinion Project of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, of which I am director. The field work, including pretesting and sampling, was done by the Dahaf Research Institute, headed by Dr. Mina Zemach.

The Dahaf Research Institute, an independent organization, is one of Israel's major public opinion institutes. It uses a stratified sampling method to represent the major demographic groups of the adult Jewish population of Israel.

Three criteria of stratification are employed: (1) four geographical areas, including Haifa and the north; Tel Aviv and the center; Jerusalem; and Beer Sheva and the south; (2) size of settlement, including the four major cities, other cities and towns, villages, and rural moshavim (cooperative settlements); and (3) age of the settlement (established before 1948 and after 1948).

Specific areas of the larger cities and towns are chosen to represent various socioeconomic and ethnic groups, based on the reports of the Central Bureau of Statistics. Sampling in each selected area is based on the size of the population relative to the total adult Jewish population. Goodness-of-fit tests for each sample indicated that the demographic characteristics of the respondents were representative of the total Jewish population of Israel.

Streets were randomly chosen. Interviewers were instructed to choose respondents based on the Kish method (Kish 1965). Sampling was carried out in two stages: (1) apartments were sampled systematically based on specified sampling fractions; (2) a list of adults residing in the sampled apartments was prepared, and from that list, respondents were chosen systematically according to the specified sampling fraction.

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The Distribution of Selected Questions

A. ARABS

1. Do you think that peace is possible between Israel and Arab states in the near future?

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Definitely	13	12	13	14	12	19
B. I think so	44	47	51	53	46	58
C. I think not	31	27	27	24	27	17
D. Definitely not	12	14	9	10	15	6
Effective *N*	1,149	1,108	855	1,218	115	1,109

2. What in your opinion are the aspirations of the Arabs in the final analysis? (A) To regain a part of the territories taken in the 1967 war; (B) To regain all the territories taken in the 1967 war; (C) To conquer Israel; (D) To conquer Israel and to annihilate a large portion of the Jews in the country.

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Regain part	5	7	12	7	5	6
B. Regain all	22	23	27	21	17	21
C. Conquer Israel	36	31	29	28	29	23
D. Conquer/kill Jews	37	39	33	45	47	49
Effective *N*	1,145	1,094	854	1,228	115	1,105

3. To prevent a war with the Arab countries, Israel should (A) Try to initiate peace negotiations; (B) Increase its military power.

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Negotiations	64	68	64	64	53	74
B. Military power	36	32	36	36	47	27
Effective *N*	1,127	1,083	839	1,180	110	1,085

4. To what extent did your estimation of Arabs* change or not change as a result of the Gulf War [1991]? (Effective N = 1,114)

Improved	*No change*	*Became worse*
3%	55%	43%

* In addition to this question, respondents were asked to what extent did the estimation of (1) Arabs of the territories, and (2) Palestinians, change or not change as a result of the Gulf War. The results, not shown here, were nearly identical to those reported.

B. SOLUTIONS

5. There are three long-range solutions for the territories held since the 1967 war. With which do you agree most? (Constructed from two questions, the first asking preference with a "leave as is" option, with a follow-up for those respondents, forcing a choice.) (A) In exchange for peace, give up the territories if Israel's security interests were provided for (second question not asked); (B) Leave the situation as it is, but if Israel had to choose, give up territories if Israel's security interests were provided for; (C) Leave the situation as it is, but no choice if Israel had to choose; (D) Leave the situation as it is, but if Israel had to choose, annex; (E) Annex the territories (second question not asked).

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Territories for peace	30	32	40	44	22	51
B. "A" on probe	9	11	10	7	6	7
C. Leave as is	4	3	2	3	2	2
D. "E" on probe	34	26	23	17	28	18
E. Annex	23	28	26	30	43	22
Effective N	1,137	1,081	846	1,235	119	1,098

6. If the territories are eventually annexed to the state of Israel, are you in favor of granting more civil rights to the Arab inhabitants than they have today, or decreasing them, or leaving them as they are today? (A) Increase, including right to vote in Knesset elections; (B) Increase without right to vote; (C) Leave things as they are now; (D) Decrease their civil rights.

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Increase and vote	18	20	15	23	17	23
B. Increase no vote	25	33	31	33	33	31
C. Leave as is	46	26	39	32	41	27
D. Decrease	11	21	16	13	9	18
Effective N	1,130	1,098	843	1,215	116	1,096

7. Do you agree or disagree that Israel should encourage the Arabs to leave the country?

	December 1987 (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Definitely agree	34	27	26	30	28
B. Agree	35	38	38	47	35
C. Do not agree	24	27	29	20	25
D. Definitely do not agree	7	9	6	3	11
Effective *N*	1,096	848	1,221	115	1,094

C. THE PLO

8. The way things are today, do you think that Israel should or should not be willing to conduct peace negotiations with the PLO?

	December 1987 (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Should be willing	33	34	40	36	29
B. Should not be willing	66	66	60	64	71
Effective *N*	1,097	858	1,238	119	1,124

9. (For those respondents who opposed negotiations in question 8): (A) Israel should be willing if the PLO undergoes basic changes and announces that it recognizes the state of Israel and will completely give up acts of terror; (B) Israel should not be willing under any conditions.

	*January 1986** (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)
A. Should	50	49	35
B. Should not	50	51	65
Effective *N*	1,145	833	873

* Asked of all respondents.

10. (For those respondents who opposed negotiations in question 8): Under what conditions should the state of Israel agree to negotiate with the PLO? (A) If the PLO unilaterally recognizes the state of Israel; (B) If the PLO recognizes the state of Israel and completely gives up acts of terror; (C) If the PLO recognizes the state of Israel, completely gives up acts of terror, and stops the intifada; (D) If the PLO recognizes the state of Israel, completely gives up acts of terror, stops the intifada, and rescinds the PLO charter; (E) Israel should not agree under any conditions.

	March–October 1990 (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991** (%)
A. Unilateral recognition	4	1	8
B. Unilateral recognition and no terror	8	8	8
C. Recognition, no terror, no intifada	18	19	13
D. Recognition, no terror, intifada, charter	29	18	20
E. Should not agree under any conditions	42	55	51
Effective *N*	834	80	1,113

* Asked of all respondents.

11. Do you think that Israel should agree or not agree to the establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip as part of a peace agreement?

	December 1987 (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Definitely agree	7	6	9	6	10
B. Probably agree	14	20	19	11	24
C. Probably not agree	27	28	27	34	21
D. Definitely not agree	52	46	44	49	46
Effective *N*	1,103	859	1,236	116	1,117

D. NUCLEAR WEAPONS

12. Should Israel develop or should Israel not develop nuclear weapons?

	December 1987 (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Should develop	78	91
B. Should not develop	22	9
Effective *N*	1,100	1,114

13. Are there circumstances that would justify the use of nuclear weapons by Israel, or should Israel not use nuclear weapons under any circumstances?

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*October 1988* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. There are circumstances	36	53	53	88
B. No circumstances	64	47	47	13
Effective *N*	1,172	1,097	816	1,092

E. THE UNITED STATES

14. What is your opinion of the United States?

	March–October 1990 (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Very good	17	11	31
B. Good	56	47	54
C. Neither good nor bad	23	33	13
D. Bad	4	6	2
E. Very bad	1	3	1
Effective *N*	1,238	117	1,117

15. How would you characterize the current relations between the United States and Israel?

	March–October 1990 (%)	Settlers, March–October 1990 (%)	March 1991 (%)
A. Very good	10	9	26
B. Good	50	39	56
C. Neither good nor bad	34	42	16
D. Bad	5	9	1
E. Very bad	1	1	. . .
Effective *N*	1,239	117	1,112

16. To what extent can Israel rely on security guarantees given by the United States?

	March–October 1990 (%)	Settlers, March–October 1990 (%)	March 1991 (%)
A. To a very great extent	11	3	20
B. To a great extent	43	37	44
C. To a moderate extent	35	49	28
D. To a small extent	7	12	5
E. Not at all	4	0	4
Effective *N*	1,235	115	1,110

17. To what extent do you think that American Jews support Israeli government policy?

	March–October 1990 (%)	Settlers, March–October 1990 (%)	March 1991 (%)
A. To a very great extent	14	14	24
B. To a great extent	44	46	48
C. To a moderate extent	37	37	25
D. To a small extent	5	3	3
E. Not at all	1	0	1
Effective *N*	1,233	113	1,111

18. If a serious policy conflict broke out between the governments of Israel and the United States, to what extent do you think that American Jews would side with Israel?

	March–October 1990 (%)	Settlers, March–October 1990 (%)	March 1991 (%)
A. To a very great extent	10	13	16
B. To a great extent	41	39	43
C. To a moderate extent	39	43	31
D. To a small extent	8	5	7
E. Not at all	2	. . .	3
Effective *N*	1,226	112	1,105

19. To what extent can American Jews influence U.S. policy regarding the Arab-Israel conflict?

	March–October 1990 (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. To a very great extent	9	8	13
B. To a great extent	41	45	37
C. To a moderate extent	42	32	36
D. To a small extent	7	14	12
E. Not at all	2	1	2
Effective *N*	1,236	115	1,104

20. In your opinion, what is the principal reason for United States support of Israel? (1991; effective *N* = 1,097)

Shared values of democracy and freedom	24%
The U.S. sees Israel as a strategic asset	60%
The influence of American Jews	13%
Americans have a negative evaluation of the Arabs	2%
The Soviet Union supports the Arabs	1%

F. THE GULF WAR

To what extent did you think that the country was ready for the following situations [during the Gulf War of 1991]? The situations were: Question 21: defending the home front; Q22: change in the daily routine; Q23: nonconventional warfare; Q24: missile attacks; Q25: absorbing immigrants.

Preparedness	*Q21* (%)	*Q22* (%)	*Q23* (%)	*Q24* (%)	*Q25* (%)
A. To a great extent	32	23	29	17	12
B. Certain extent	44	44	37	38	24
C. Small extent	13	21	17	22	31
D. Not enough	11	12	17	23	32
Effective *N*	1,120	1,106	1,105	1,115	1,119

G. BELIEFS

26. Who is the guardian of Israel? (A) God; (B) Israel Defense Forces (IDF); (C) The United States of America; (D) The state of Israel; (E) The Jewish people; (F) Each person must watch out for him/herself.

	January 1986 (%)	*December 1987* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. God	17	19	23
B. IDF	57	61	56
C. USA	2	4	2
D. State of Israel	13	7	6
E. Jewish people	10	7	8
F. Each for self	2	2	5
Effective *N*	1,141	1,094	1,125

27. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "God will watch over us, if we are deserving, even if we are not prepared for the next war."

	December 1987 (%)	*March–October 1990* (%)	*Settlers, March–October 1990* (%)	*March 1991* (%)
A. Definitely agree	15	16	11	19
B. Agree	22	23	32	26
C. Do not agree	33	32	32	32
D. Definitely do not agree	30	28	24	24
Effective *N*	1,085	1,217	108	1,100

H. POLARIZATION

28. Did the Gulf War change or did it not change your opinion regarding the security and political situation? If it did, would you say you became more moderate or more militant? (March 1991; effective *N* = 1,052)

Vote Intention	*Left* (8%)	*Labor* (20%)	*Likud* (36%)	*Right* (10%)	*Religious* (7%)	*No Decision* (20%)
A. More moderate (15%)	18	22	15	11	3	14
B. No change (71%)	79	66	68	66	90	75
C. More militant (14%)	4	12	17	23	7	11

29. And what about the importance of the territories for the country's security? Did the missiles fired from Iraq change or did they not change your opinion regarding the importance of the territories for the country's security? If they did, did you think the territories had become more important for the country's security, or did you think that they had become less important for Israel's security? (March 1991; effective *N* = 1,049)

Vote Intention	*Left* (8%)	*Labor* (19%)	*Likud* (36%)	*Right* (10%)	*Religious* (6%)	*No Decision* (20%)
A. More important (17%)	5	10	23	24	18	16
B. No change (71%)	76	71	67	70	76	73
C. Less important (12%)	19	19	11	7	6	11

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Public Opinion Quarterly

Published for the American
Association for Public Opinion
Research by the University of
Chicago Press

ALBERT C. GUNTHER — Biased Press or Biased Public?

DAVID J. LANOUE — Consistency, Knowledge, and Presidential Debate

CHERYL LYN HERRERA, RICHARD HERRERA, and ERIC R. A. N. SMITH — Public Opinion and Representation

TWO ARTICLES ON QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONNAIRES

MARIA ELENA SANCHEZ — Questionnaire Design

FLOYD JACKSON FOWLER, JR. — Unclear Questions

RESEARCH NOTES — *Cheryl Katz* and *Mark Baldassare* on "The 'L-Word' in Public," *Stanley Presser* and *Shanyang Zhao* on "Correlates of Interviewing Performance," and *John P. Walsh* and others on "A Computer Network Survey"

THE POLLS — Review: Exit Polls in Virginia *by Michael W. Traugott and Vincent Price*

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Summer 1992

Public Opinion Quarterly

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

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Public Opinion Quarterly (ISSN 0033-362X) Volume 56, 4 issues (1992)

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Published quarterly: Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter, by The University of Chicago Press, 5720 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, IL. Subscription rates, U.S.A.: institutions 1 year $40.00; individuals 1 year $20.00. Special rates available to members of AAPOR. Student subscription rate (with copy of validated ID), U.S.A.: individuals 1 year $18.00. In Canada, add 7% GST to subscription price. Outside of U.S.A., add $3.00 for each year's subscription to cover postage. Japanese subscription agent: Kinokuniya Company Ltd.

POSTMASTER: Please send all change of address notices to Public Opinion Quarterly, University of Chicago Press, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637.

Mail orders and direct subscription information to: Journals Fulfillment Department, University of Chicago Press, P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637.

Single copy and back volume information furnished upon written request. Indexed by Public Affairs Information Services, Social Sciences Index, United States Political Science Documents, Combined Retrospective Index Sets (CRIS), and Political Science Abstracts (PSA). Available from University Microfilms International (UMI).

Editorial Office: Institute for Social Research
P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106
Business, Subscriptions, Back Issues: University of Chicago Press,
P.O. Box 37005, Chicago, IL 60637
AAPOR: P.O. Box 1248, Ann Arbor, MI 48106

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PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984. ♾

PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 56 / SUMMER 1992 / NUMBER 2

Articles

Biased Press or Biased Public? Attitudes toward Media Coverage of Social Groups 147
ALBERT C. GUNTHER

One That Made a Difference: Cognitive Consistency, Political Knowledge, and the 1980 Presidential Debate 168
DAVID J. LANOUE

Public Opinion and Congressional Representation 185
CHERYL LYN HERRERA, RICHARD HERRERA, and ERIC R. A. N. SMITH

Two Articles on Questions and Questionnaires

Effects of Questionnaire Design on the Quality of Survey Data 206
MARIA ELENA SANCHEZ

How Unclear Terms Affect Survey Data 218
FLOYD JACKSON FOWLER, JR.

Research Notes

Using the "L-Word" in Public: A Test of the Spiral of Silence in Conservative Orange County, California 232
CHERYL KATZ and MARK BALDASSARE

Attributes of Questions and Interviewers as Correlates of Interviewing Performance 236
STANLEY PRESSER and SHANYANG ZHAO

Self-selected and Randomly Selected Respondents in a Computer Network Survey 241
JOHN P. WALSH, SARA KIESLER, LEE S. SPROULL, and BRADFORD W. HESSE

The Polls

Review: Exit Polls in the 1989 Virginia Gubernatorial Race: Where Did They Go Wrong? 245
MICHAEL W. TRAUGOTT and VINCENT PRICE

Comment

Comment 254
FREDRICK KOENIG

Book Reviews

Herbert H. Hyman, *Taking Society's Measure* 255
NORMAN M. BRADBURN

Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* 257
KURT W. BACK

Joan E. Sieber, ed., *Sharing Social Science Data* 258
JEROME M. CLUBB

Michael L. Young, *The Classics of Polling* 259
ELEANOR SINGER

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BIASED PRESS OR BIASED PUBLIC?
ATTITUDES TOWARD MEDIA COVERAGE OF SOCIAL GROUPS

ALBERT C. GUNTHER

Abstract Mass media credibility has been defined and studied largely as an attribute of message sources. This article argues that trust in media can be better understood as a relational variable—an audience response to media content. In addition, audience assessments of credibility are commonly explained as the result of each individual's skeptical disposition, either toward mass media in particular or as a general trait. The author dissents from this view as well, proposing that distrust is more likely to be a situational response, stemming from involvement with issues and groups. Using data from a national probability sample, the hypothesis was tested by analyzing the effect of numerous independent variables on respondent ratings of newspaper and television news coverage of social groups. As hypothesized, a respondent's own group identification proved to be the strongest predictor. The evidence was strengthened by replication across social groups, which provided built-in controls and demonstrated that an important part of the variance in trust of mass media news is within persons rather than between persons.

Introduction

Belief in a gullible public seems to be widely shared. Yet the public is frequently skeptical about information from media sources like newspapers and television (see, e.g., Clark, Martire, and Bartolomeo 1984; Harris 1983; McCombs and Washington 1983). Research has not explained much about the origins of either trusting or skeptical public attitudes toward the press. Past studies have focused on factors such as media characteristics, audience demographics, or general skepti-

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I thank Cecilie Gaziano, project director for the collection of these data, and Diana Mutz, Steven Chaffee, and Garrett O'Keefe, who provided helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article. Thanks also to Paul Mundy and Lulu Rodriguez for help with preparation of data and tables.

Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:147–167 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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cism, but I will argue that trust in press coverage of issues or groups is more likely to be a consequence of a person's involvement with those issues and groups than of traditional predictors.

MEDIA ATTRIBUTES

The most frequent explanations of credibility point to media character. In the words of *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee: "The credibility of a newspaper is its most precious asset, and it depends almost entirely on the integrity of its reporters" (1981). Indeed, in research on mass media, credibility has been defined primarily as an attribute of the source; the unit of analysis is typically a particular newspaper, or a media institution such as television.

Examinations of mass media for credible news coverage are most clearly illustrated in content analyses (see, e.g., Graber 1987; Robinson 1987). A classic example is Shaw's (1967) study of decreasing bias in newspaper content during the rise of the wire services. While of unquestioned value, content analyses necessarily focus on the message source in the communication process, and a source-oriented research perspective inclines us to ask what messages do to people rather than what people do with messages. Even when credibility is measured in the audience, as in public opinion surveys, the outcome is typically represented as an attribute of media. Descriptive studies, for example, ask such questions as how newspapers stack up against television (Roper 1985). This approach embeds the concept in media character rather than in the audiences where it is measured.

One alternative orientation lies in defining credibility not as an objective property of the source but as a receiver perception.[1] Audience characteristics then become an inviting course of theoretical inquiry, but there are a variety of factors to consider. Is perceived media credibility the result of variation in demographics? Does a trusting or skeptical disposition explain it? Or is there something else at work?

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

Some research has identified correlates of media credibility—such as age, sex, education—in the media audience (Becker, Cobbey, and Sobowale 1978; Lewis 1981; Westley and Severin 1964). But this work is largely atheoretical. Few authors have proposed or tested explanations.

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[1] Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969) argued that "source credibility" is a misleading label for it casts as a source attribute a phenomenon properly examined as a receiver response to a source. Very little research, however, has taken that perspective either conceptually or theoretically.

Other audience-oriented studies have developed person typologies. Westley and Severin constructed an " 'ideal type' of media user who is especially likely to assign high credibility to the newspaper" (1964, p. 334), based on variables—education, income, urbanism, and gender—that had the strongest relationships to credibility. Gaziano and McGrath (1986) used credibility of media scores to classify respondents as high, medium, or low in credibility evaluations, and Ismach (1975) identified types of people according to an incredulity index, measuring the general disposition of an individual to disbelieve information.

THE SKEPTICAL DISPOSITION

An analysis that classifies people by types suggests that credibility can be best explained according to a person's disposition to trust or distrust media. But diverse dimensions have emerged from factor analyses of the credibility concept (see, e.g., Markham 1968; Singletary 1976), and there does not appear to be a multidimensional stability underlying the concept. Credibility is not a trait that people ascribe consistently to a channel but, rather, a highly situational assessment (Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz 1969; Chaffee 1982).

Considering a credibility assessment as a situational response suggests an alternative approach to the concept—one that treats it as a relation term rather than a property of persons.[2] While a dispositional view predicts a reflex trust response across situations, the situational approach proposes that important components of the trusting or skeptical response do not exist until a person has something to be trusting or skeptical about.

Some degree of skepticism toward mass media may be predicted by a skeptical disposition, but an alternative explanation is also favored by contemporary social psychology, which argues that people tend to overweight dispositional as opposed to situational influences in explaining human behavior. This misperception has been called the fundamental attribution error "whereby actions are incorrectly seen as evidence of the actor's traits rather than as a result of situational forces" (Ross 1981, p. 33). I would argue that behavioral scientists are prone to the same error and have neglected situational variables.

When measured, situational variables have proven good predictors of credibility. Trust in media treatment of a particular issue declines, for example, when the issue is seen as more controversial (Roberts and Leifer 1975), or as bad news (Stone and Beell 1975). In an experiment with Arab and Israeli students, Vallone, Ross, and Lepper (1985) found that those notably partisan on Mideast issues perceived more bias—bias contrary to their own position—in media coverage of the so-called Beirut massacre (see also Perloff 1989). And I have found (1988) that as people's attitudes on a number of issues like abortion or welfare were more polarized—in any direction—their trust in mass media coverage of those issues declined. The latter three studies suggest a connection between an individual's personal stake in an issue and media credibility judgments. Those most involved in an issue, demonstrated by their highly partisan or polarized attitudes, were also most skeptical of mass media.

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[2] As a property the concept may be called a trait, observable in a single unit of analysis, but as a relation it is only observable in contact with other ideas or objects. Hempel (1952) would describe it this way: when "*X* is skeptical" it is a property; but when "*X* is skeptical about *Y*," skepticism is a relational term.

INVOLVEMENT

The large body of research on involvement includes a number of studies that suggest explanations for a connection between an individual's personal involvement with issues or groups and distrust of media. For instance, the information processing described in social judgment theory (see, e.g., Sherif, Sherif, and Nebergall 1965) depends on different levels of involvement. Those differences, argued Sherif et al., will be associated with different "latitudes" of acceptance, rejection, or noncommitment for different messages concerning an issue. Given the entire range of attitude statements or opinions about an issue, the "latitude of acceptance" constitutes an interval of statements we would find acceptable or agreeable with our "own opinion." The "latitude of rejection" defines those statements judged unacceptable. The residual "latitude of noncommitment" is a band of statements, falling between the other two, which we neither agree with nor discard. These statements presumably are open to consideration and subject to later judgments of acceptance or rejection. In the high-involvement condition, social judgment predicts a wider latitude of rejection. With less involving topics, however, the latitude of rejection is narrower, and more messages are likely to fall into the range of acceptance or noncommitment and, therefore, more likely to be considered.

An array of more recent involvement studies suggests, however, that highly involved people do not discard a counterattitudinal message out of hand, as social judgment theory might argue. The elaboration likelihood model of Petty and Cacioppo (1986), for example, proposes that highly involved people do more message elaboration—more thinking about the contents of a message—because their greater personal concern gives them more reason to seek correct information and opinions. Such message elaboration might suggest that high-involvement people are just as likely, if not more likely, to be persuaded by arguments on an issue and not any more inclined to perceive messages as biased.

But people who are highly involved with an issue are also likely to have a more fixed or firmly held position on the issue, a more polarized position on the issue, more prior knowledge about the issue, more self-perceived expertise on the issue, more experience with thinking, discussing, or arguing about the issue, and more intense personal interest in the issue. Furthermore, the importance of maintaining a positive sense of self may incline such people to consider their existing attitudes correct, and to want to hold on to them, even in the face of dissonant information or opinion. For these reasons, highly involved people have the ability and motivation to undertake what Petty and Cacioppo call "biased processing." That is, prior opinion steers their perceptions and processing of the message in such a way as to maintain the original opinion (Ross, Lepper, and Hubbard 1975). Highly involved people, then, are likely to demonstrate biased processing by (1) taking consonant information (that which falls in a narrow range of acceptance) as simply veridical, and embracing it, but (2) judging counterattitudinal information to be the product of a biased, misguided, or ill-informed source, and rejecting it.

Previous research has argued that naturally occurring involvement in field settings (in contrast to involvement manipulated in lab experiments) tends to be more personal, profound, and deeply felt (Gunther 1988; Roser 1990). In such circumstances, where involvement is particularly high, cognitive elaboration actually can be terminated as a person rejects discrepant messages without thinking about the content (Greenwald 1981; Ostrom and Brock 1968).

There is a widely distributed literature asserting that highly involved people demonstrate a greater resistance to persuasion (see, e.g., Converse 1962; Hovland and Weiss 1951). In fact, research has shown that people with strong opinions on an issue can actually become more polarized after processing balanced, two-sided information on the issue (Lord, Ross, and Lepper 1979). Most of this work suggests that the resistance mechanism lies in finding the message implausible or the source incredible, a mechanism Osgood and Tannenbaum labeled the "correction for incredulity" (1955).

That is not to rule out circumstances where persuasion does occur in the high-involvement condition. More involved people have exhibited more attitude change (even against their initial point of view) in the face of strong arguments (Petty and Cacioppo 1979) or because the message comes from an identifiably congenial source (Zaller 1987). The reasoning proposed here is only that highly involved people are generally more likely to take a biased approach to the elaboration of the message and therefore be more resistant to the content and more skeptical of the source.

However theoretically promising, involvement is conceptually problematic because it is a broadly defined term that has been operationalized in diverse ways. Previous research on this topic has used issue involvement, with extremity of attitude toward various issues as an indicator (Gunther 1988). But a useful alternative definition for involvement is group membership (see Kiesler, Collins, and Miller 1969). Membership in political, religious, ethnic, or other social groups carries with it attitudes, beliefs, and a personal stake in group concerns. This measure of involvement, sometimes called ego-involvement, is associated with a strong and often enduring sense of self. Catholics, for example, are likely to be more highly involved with information and issues concerning Catholics than are people in other religious categories. To the extent that it captures a person's personal identity and deeper forms of commitment, identification with a group can define a fundamental sense of involvement (Salmon 1986; Sherif and Hovland 1961), and it is the operationalization employed here.

This article proposes that among the many variables posed and tested as predictors of credibility, a person's involvement in situations, issues, or groups will show the greatest explanatory power. Such an expectation follows from the four propositions discussed above. First, media credibility is a receiver assessment, not a source characteristic, and therefore variables predicting credibility are more likely to be associated with the receiver than with the source. Second, audience demographics have been proposed as predictors of trust in media, but with little theoretical basis and little empirical support. Third, a skeptical disposition might predict credibility judgments, but findings in social psychology suggest that situational factors often outweigh dispositional ones. And finally, information processing theories predict that group involvement (a situational factor, not a personality disposition) will stimulate biased processing, having an important effect on evaluations of messages and sources. Thus it is hypothesized that group involvement will predict more variance in respondents' credibility judgments of media than will media attributes, demographic variables, a skeptical disposition, or a disposition to distrust media in general.

Data and Methods

Because of growing concern about mass media credibility in the mid-1980s, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) commissioned an extensive study of the press's public image (1985). A national telephone survey of adults in the contiguous United States was administered during December 1984 and January 1985. The survey employed random-digit dialing, and up to three callbacks were made. Respondents, age 18 or older, were randomly selected within households.

The survey was conducted in two parts, with an initial 20-minute interview providing demographic information and other data relevant to the independent variables in this study. Interviewers achieved a 58 percent completion rate (N = 1,600) with eligible respondents in this first phase of the study. The second part of the survey was a mailed questionnaire. Respondents received a follow-up call after 1 week in which interviewers recorded answers to part 2 of the questionnaire over the telephone. The interviewers collected data from 63 percent of the initial sample in this second phase. Because the second part of the survey included the dependent variables of interest, only second-phase respondents (N = 985) were included in the analyses that follow. This subsample therefore yields a rather low 36.5 percent overall response rate and somewhat underrepresents people with lower education and income, black males, younger (age 18–25) and older (65 +) people (see Gaziano and McGrath [1986] for more detail). Comparisons of the mailed-survey subsample to the full sample, however, revealed no significant differences in such attributes as media use, demographics, or attitudes toward news and the media. Further, while the loss of lower-socioeconomic-status respondents may have biased the sample in favor of those more politically involved and more attentive to media coverage, such bias would pose, if anything, a more stringent test of the hypothesis by heightening the importance of those rival explanatory factors.

The ASNE survey asked respondents to rate the credibility of news coverage of many social groups and institutions—providing a useful set of dependent variables. The survey additionally contains such a variety of related data that it allows one to operationalize simultaneously most of the diverse concepts that have been posed as predictors of mass media credibility. Thus it affords an important comparative test of the relative explanatory power of each group of variables across a number of situations. (See the Appendix for wording and coding of survey items.)

Objective media attributes. Since objective characteristics of a medium are often seen to be the mainstay of its credibility, a number of these factors were included in the analyses. The ASNE survey provided unusually rich data in this category, for the newspaper named as "most familiar" by each respondent was coded for these variables. They included (1) number of newspapers in competition in the respondent's market, (2) whether the newspaper was chain-owned or independent, (3) whether the newspaper had a reader's representative (ombudsman), and (4) circulation size. Respondents' newspapers were also classified by political affiliation. However, contemporary U.S. media so rarely declare an affiliation (fewer than 10 percent of respondents read a paper that labeled itself either Republican or Democratic) that a new variable was calculated for this analysis, indicating (5) political distance between respondents and their newspapers. Thus reader/newspaper political distance could be close (e.g., a Democrat reading a Democratic newspaper), moderately distant (a Democrat reading an Independent newspaper), or very distant (a Democrat reading a Republican newspaper).[3]

Corresponding characteristics of broadcast media were not measured in this study and could not be included in the second part of the analysis.

Perceived media attributes. Though objective characteristics of a medium are commonly cited as the source of its credibility, it is theoretically more likely that respondents' perceptions of such traits would make a difference. In a set of subjective companion characteristics, respondents reported their perceptions of attributes of the daily newspaper with which they were most familiar: (1) whether the editorial staff included an ombudsman, (2) whether ownership was held by a large company that owned many newspapers and other types of businesses or by a small company, and (3) whether it was owned locally or by an outside company.

Demographic predictors. The initial questionnaire contained demographic items including sex, age, income, and education, some of which, as noted above, have been correlated with media credibility in past research.

Skepticism toward media. Respondents answered a number of questions about general mass media performance. These included Likert-scaled statements such as whether news reporters try to be objective and whether most media separate fact from opinion. Six of these items were summed to create a media credibility index. Though the items described fairly diverse attributes of press performance, respondents answered them with a good degree of internal consistency ($\alpha = .68$).

Skeptical disposition. Since each person's disposition to be trusting or distrusting—what might be called the innate skepticism in each of us—is also often proposed as a predictor of press credibility, and since the survey items included numerous measures of trust in both people running institutions and people in various occupations, an additional index of general skepticism was created. Respondents rated their confidence in people running the following institutions—banks, organized religion, education, executive branch of government, organized labor, Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court. They also rated the honesty and ethical standards of the clergy, police, doctors, ad executives, schoolteachers, and used car salesmen. Press-related categories like television reporters or newspaper editors were omitted from the index to minimize artifactual intercorrelation with other independent variables. The 13 items composing the general trust index also produced acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .73$).

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[3] Thirty-two percent of respondents read a paper of the same political affiliation, 63 percent were moderately distant, and 2 percent were very distant.

As expected, the media trust factor and the general trust factor were somewhat related ($r = .14$, $p < .001$), but not strongly enough to prevent treating the two as discrete.

Involvement. The concept of particular interest in this study is involvement, and it can be operationalized readily as group membership for each respondent in these data. Since the dependent variables concern media coverage of various groups, respondents were sorted, for each analysis, according to their membership in the corresponding social group. Dichotomous variables were created so that for each group, each respondent was coded as having group membership, or not. Social groups (and their sample sizes) included Republicans (327), Democrats (325), Catholics (251), born-again Christians (329), blacks (60), Hispanics (52), and labor union members (226). Membership was reasonably well dispersed across groups: 39 percent of respondents fell into two categories, 16 percent into three, and 3 percent belonged to four of the social groups.

Fair versus unfavorable coverage. The dependent variables were derived from a series of questions in the mailed portion of the survey asking about both television and newspaper coverage of particular social groups, and whether that coverage was "too favorable," "just about right," or "not favorable enough." These variables were recoded as dichotomous, collapsing the first two categories.[4] The assumption behind this operationalization of the credibility of media news coverage was that a "not favorable enough" response signified the perception of negative bias and correspondingly untrustworthy news content.

There is a theoretical, but unmeasured, continuum underlying the dependent measures in this research—namely, that coverage actually can be registered anywhere along a scale from extremely unfavorable to neutral. But because of the range restrictions, the theoretical continuum has been collapsed into an ordinal, dichotomous scale. Therefore, assumptions about linearity are unrealistic and ordinary least squares analysis presents numerous difficulties (Aldrich and Cnudde 1975). Instead, these data were analyzed with probit analyses.

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[4] Though particular groups might have described coverage as too favorable (an outcome that will be discussed further), and some information was lost in taking this step, such evidence does not bear on the hypotheses and would complicate the analysis unnecessarily.

A probit analysis necessarily overlooks some of the predictive power of more finely measured variance in a continuum, but in this case it gives the best available estimate of the weighted linear combination of independent variables. The analysis produces what is often called the maximum likelihood of contribution of each of the independent variables.

Results

Tables 1 and 2 summarize probit analyses (of newspaper and television, respectively) for each of the dependent variables—unfavorability of coverage of seven different groups. Table entries represent the probit estimate or maximum likelihood estimate (MLE), with a *t*-statistic (in parentheses) computed as the ratio of the probit coefficient to its standard error (MLE/SE). Significance levels were assigned according to critical two-tailed values in the Student's *t* distribution. Two-tailed values were used because a directional hypothesis could not be posed for some of the independent variables.

Involvement. The hypothesis that group involvement is an important predictor of credibility judgments received good support in these data. In every case, and for both newspapers and television news, social group membership (entered in the bottom row of both tables) showed a strong relationship to judgments of news coverage. If a person identified with a particular group, he or she was significantly more likely to say the media gave unfavorable coverage to that group. In addition, group membership predicted credibility judgments more systematically than any of the other variables measured in this study.

Media attributes. Neither objective media attributes nor perceptions of media structure or ownership were significantly related, for the most part, to trust judgments of print media.

Audience demographics. The demographic factors, in what might be called a "roundup of the usual suspects," also showed no pattern of relationship to the dependent variable, except in the case of age. In that row a systematic negative association is apparent in estimations of both television and newspaper coverage of ethnic groups (blacks and hispanics) and of born-again Christians. Younger respondents find this coverage not favorable enough, while their elders judge it to be at least adequate.

Skeptical disposition. The general skepticism factor was significant for both media only in the case of coverage of Democrats. The more specific disposition to distrust media, by contrast, showed a significant connection with coverage of Democrats and Republicans and also born-again Christians.

However, in all seven analyses none of these independent factors demonstrated the consistency of predictive power evident in group membership, even when their share of the variance was partialed out in the equation.

Model elaborations. In the case of coverage of political groups, these data provided evidence for an additional test of the involvement hypothesis. Biased processing suggests not only that Republicans will judge press coverage of Republicans "not favorable enough" but also that Democrats will judge coverage of Republicans "too favorable"—that is, equally biased, but in the opposite direction. When the dependent variable was recoded as too favorable, or not, a second set of probit analyses, run with the complete array of rival independent variables, confirmed this expectation. Democrats viewed coverage of Republicans as too favorable both by their own newspaper (MLE/SE = 7.21, $p < .001$) and by television news (MLE/SE = 7.20, $p < .001$). Republicans saw a similar positive bias in coverage of Democrats for their newspaper (MLE/SE = 4.35, $p < .001$) and for television (MLE/SE = 5.13, $p < .001$).[5] No opposition groups could be identified for the other social categories, but one might expect the theoretical principle to apply widely.

The reader may be interested to note that intercepts in both tables vary, and they are markedly lower for the political categories, indicating what may be important differences in perceived credibility of media coverage across social groups.

Significance of replication. Since the seven analyses represent replications of the hypothesis test, it is important to assess the independence of these tests. The advantages of replication would be diminished to the extent that respondents might be repeatedly classified as members of the relevant groups, that is, as consistently falling in the high-involvement condition. An examination of the percentage of respondents in every possible pair of groups, however, reveals no significant overlapping. Though some people inevitably fall into more than one group category—blacks, for example, are more likely also to be Democrats—none of the percentages are high (highest is the 14 percent who are both Democrats and born-again Christians). On the average, across all 21 possible pairs, only 4.76 percent of respondents share membership in any two groups, thus assuring the relative independence of the separate analyses.

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[5] These additional probit analyses produced no notable changes in estimates of other independent variables. The nature of variation in the outcome measures and the large number of independent factors precluded analysis by other techniques.

Table 1. Probit Estimates for Variables[a] Predicting Perception of Unfavorable Newspaper Coverage (MLE/SE in Parentheses)

	Perceived Newspaper Coverage of						
	Republicans	Democrats	Catholics	Born-again Christians	Blacks	Hispanics	Labor Union Members
Objective media attributes:[b]							
Market competition	−.24	.46	.17	−.15	.37	.24	.27
	(−.82)	(1.64)	(.57)	(−.61)	(1.55)	(1.03)	(1.08)
Chain	.94	.30	−.37	.00	.12	.63	.10
	(1.68)	(.58)	(−.60)	(−.01)	(−.27)	(1.41)	(.22)
Ombudsman	.09	−.64	−.14	.26	.53	.57	.73
	(.12)	(−.92)	(−.19)	(.38)	(.84)	(.92)	(1.08)
Circulation	1.21**	−.64	.37	.81*	−.46	.28	−.22
	(2.70)	(−1.63)	(.85)	(2.30)	(−1.38)	(.80)	(−.62)
Political distance	−.69	−.10	.32	.24	.19	.26	.15
	(−1.27)	(−.20)	(.64)	(.60)	(.52)	(.70)	(.39)
Perceived media attributes:							
Ombudsman	.27	−.40	.64	.04	.12	−.04	.12
	(.72)	(−1.07)	(1.65)	(.11)	(.40)	(−.12)	(.38)
Company size	−.69	.32	.08	.11	.04	−.03	−.37
	(−1.92)	(.92)	(.21)	(.35)	(.12)	(−.09)	(−1.19)
Locally owned	−.40	−.35	.15	.47	.06	.07	−.15
	(−1.10)	(−1.09)	(.43)	(1.57)	(.21)	(.25)	(−.51)

Demographics:							
Education	1.16	1.24	−1.58	−.88	.07	1.20	−.86
	(1.23)	(1.47)	(−1.71)	(−1.06)	(.10)	(1.52)	(1.11)
Income	−.38	−.34	−.33	.60	−.10	.05	−.11
	(−1.23)	(−1.18)	(−1.08)	(2.13)	(−.40)	(.19)	(−.41)
Age	.36	.42	−.57	−1.59***	−1.22***	−1.26***	−.49
	(.82)	(1.02)	(−1.27)	(−4.05)	(−3.51)	(−3.51)	(−1.30)
Gender	−.52	.49	.79	.36	.61	.41	−.39
	(−1.07)	(1.07)	(1.54)	(.86)	(1.60)	(1.04)	(−.98)
Other factors:							
General skepticism	−1.07	2.70**	−.78	.68	−1.22	−.54	1.51
	(−1.03)	(2.83)	(−.74)	(.79)	(.92)	(−.66)	(1.77)
Skepticism re media	5.00***	1.73*	.57	1.43*	.56	.02	−.16
	(5.17)	(2.28)	(.74)	(2.11)	(1.55)	(.03)	(−.26)
Group membership	1.81***	3.07***	2.09***	2.34***	3.18***	2.33**	1.97***
	(3.34)	(6.19)	(4.16)	(5.74)	(4.75)	(3.28)	(4.72)
Constant	−.647	.058	5.546	5.348	5.581	4.169	5.109
df	788	789	784	704	785	784	783
% predicted correctly	.91	.89	.93	.85	.83	.88	.86

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[a] Coding for all variables is detailed in the appendix.

[b] The newspaper each respondent named as most familiar was coded for these variables.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Table 2. Probit Estimates for Variables[a] Predicting Perception of Unfavorable Television Coverage (MLE/SE in parentheses)

	Perceived Television Coverage of						
	Republicans	Democrats	Catholics	Born-again Christians	Blacks	Hispanics	Labor Union Members
Demographics:							
Education	−.38	1.71	−1.01	−.76	.74	.03	−.33
	(−.48)	(1.90)	(−1.16)	(−1.09)	(1.10)	(.04)	(−.43)
Income	−.19	−1.15***	−.14	.05	−.11	−.34	−.39
	(−.70)	(−4.06)	(−.46)	(.23)	(−.47)	(1.51)	(1.51)
Age	.82*	.00	−.77	−1.29***	−1.31***	−1.26***	−.42
	(2.10)	(.00)	(−1.83)	(−3.92)	(3.98)	(−3.79)	(1.13)
Gender	−.64	.53	.57	.40	.85*	.66	−.36
	(1.47)	(1.07)	(1.20)	(1.10)	(2.33)	(1.76)	(−.90)
Other factors:							
General skepticism	−.40	2.86**	.72	.19	−.66	−.24	.69
	(−.45)	(2.79)	(−.76)	(.26)	(−.91)	(−.32)	(.84)
Skepticism re media	4.59***	1.93*	−.17	.97	.63	.97	−.06
	(5.45)	(2.25)	(−.23)	(1.68)	(1.07)	(1.59)	(−.09)
Group membership	2.36***	2.85***	1.35**	2.78***	3.54***	2.08**	2.18***
	(5.55)	(5.80)	(2.80)	(7.80)	(5.47)	(3.00)	(5.13)
Constant	1.076	.856	5.906	6.871	4.889	5.481	5.340
df	883	883	887	797	894	892	889
% predicted correctly	.91	.93	.94	.79	.86	.87	.90

[a] Coding for all variables is detailed in the appendix.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Discussion

The most prominent and certain conclusion to be drawn from these data is that group membership does indeed play a role in public perceptions of the fairness or credibility of mass media. The findings are consistent with the prediction that high involvement prompts not only more scrutiny but more biased scrutiny of media content and therefore increases the likelihood that a person will take a skeptical view of the source of that content. In the diverse and plentiful research devoted to media credibility, however, little attention has been given to this relationship.

Of course, high-involvement people often do know more about an issue or group than their less involved counterparts, and therefore some portion of perceived distortion in news coverage may consist of the real errors or omissions that people with such expertise accurately discern. But occasions where opposing social groups find the same message biased, but biased in opposite directions (see, e.g., Hastorf and Cantril 1954; Vallone, Ross, and Lepper 1985), support the view that a significant portion of perceived bias stems from causes other than special knowledge. Similar support is found in this study as well, for Republican and Democratic groups each perceive media coverage that favors the other side. One might argue that these opposition groups are not evaluating the same content when they report bias. But, on the other hand, one would expect respondents to be exposed to media that are, if anything, more consonant with their own views, and therefore the objective content they read should work against the perception of unfavorable bias. Nevertheless, the finding appears to be robust.

The data also support a second conclusion—that media credibility is more clearly a function of involvement than of variables examined in past research. A number of rival explanations have been tested in this comparative analysis—newspaper characteristics, audience demographics, personal dispositions—and only one or two stand up, and even those quite unsteadily, next to the predictive power of the involvement factor.

The newspaper attributes in this study, either objective or subjective, are not associated with respondents' credibility assessments. Particularly notable is the lack of effect of a newspaper's political affiliation relative to the reader, even in its coverage of political groups. This null finding may result from the professional norm of objectivity and a mainstream press that takes pains to avoid any partisan posture, so that actual political affiliation is imperceptible to most readers (see Gunther and Snyder, in press). Nevertheless, media characteristics most likely play a larger role in other situations. Dramatic swings in the style of media performance—such as press censorship following the prodemocracy movement in China, or in the Soviet Union's experience with *glasnost*—surely have a dramatic effect on credibility judgments.

In the realm of audience attributes, demographic factors are also unproductive as independent variables except in the case of age, which is particularly associated with the two ethnic groups and born-again Christians. Though it is post hoc speculation, one might consider a number of explanations for this finding, including the idea that younger people are more sensitized to the social conflict surrounding racial issues and racial groups. Previous research has demonstrated that people are inclined to be more skeptical as news coverage focuses on more controversial topics (Roberts and Leifer 1975).

The final theoretical question addressed by these rival explanations was that of the situational versus dispositional response, and the former clearly shapes the answer here. Distinguishing "types" of people tells us less about how they process information and assess sources than do the circumstances at hand. To the degree that these data support the situational response, and they support it quite strongly, they affirm that the important variance is within persons, not between persons. That is, a distrusting disposition may predict credibility judgments in some cases—it is influential here in the case of political groups—but we should expect to find each individual making very different trust judgments depending on variance in his or her involvement.[6]

An important element in this research is its support for the generalizability of the involvement hypothesis. Finding an effect in relation to one particular group is a meaningful finding, but it is vulnerable to the argument that the effect is peculiar to that group. Evidence across a number of groups, as these data show, strengthens support for the general case.

There is an element of quasi-experimental control in this sample survey that supports internal validity as well. Across the seven analyses, a majority of respondents have "assigned themselves" to different conditions on the independent variable. One may be a Democrat, and Hispanic, for example, but not fall into any other relevant group categories. Though it is not strict random assignment, this fact offers some measure of control for other variables. If group categories were not relatively independent, one could argue that some other factor explained both subjects' group membership and their trust in media coverage. The fact that people fall into only some of these group membership categories, and yet demonstrate the hypothesized effect for all categories, is a good defense against such rival explanations.

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[6] Different indicators of involvement, such as extremity of attitude on an issue, have produced similar findings (Gunther 1988), reinforcing the conceptual and theoretical validity of this relationship.

Their differing perceptions of the same message and message source might seem to cast receivers in an unenviable role, where perceptions of reality are skewed by personal predilections. But while some of an individual message receiver's judgments may be wrong, they are made for sensible reasons. The model proposes that people are ordinarily open to, and impartial toward, a wide latitude of media content, a useful posture for productive surveillance and information seeking, but that a highly involved person protects a strongly held attitude by taking a critical or even slanted view of the content. From an audience point of view, each of these is a practical strategy.

Though attitude change effects lie beyond the scope of this research, these data have some significance for understanding persuasion processes. Hovland's early work established the importance of credibility to persuasion, but an all-too-common assumption in persuasion literature is that credibility is a property of the source, when it may depend far more importantly on the individual and the situation.[7]

If mass media organizations are increasingly concerned about the causes of skepticism and distrust of media—and the large number of studies commissioned recently suggests that they are—then the findings presented here are relevant to that concern. The *Washington Post*'s Bradlee may have overstated the case when he said media credibility "depends almost entirely" on the integrity of reporters. Maintaining a standard of fairness and expertise is surely important to media confidence ratings, but audience-centered research suggests that what mass media do is not the only thing affecting these ratings. There is evidence here that audience involvement, a factor outside the media corpus, is at least one significant variable associated with audience trust.

In a 1986 speech to the American Association for Public Opinion Research, NBC News president Lawrence Grossman said that credibility should not be a concern of such high priority to the press: "We have to do things occasionally that people may not like, but are nonetheless important to do" (John 1986). Grossman may be right for another reason as well. It is what audiences do with news, as well as what newspeople do with news, that accounts for judgments of trust in mass media.

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[7] Hovland's research group itself had a glimpse of the biased processing phenomenon. They noted that although their intention was to manipulate credibility by attributing the same message to sources of varying characteristics, the audience's evaluations of trustworthiness of the source "were also affected by their personal opinions on the topic before the communication was ever presented" (Hovland and Weiss, p. 641).

Appendix
Question Wording and Coding for Relevant ASNE Survey Variables

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Here are some kinds of people. For each, please give your opinion of how they are covered by [the daily paper you are most familiar with/television news]. Is the coverage too favorable, just about right, or not favorable enough? Republicans, Democrats, Catholics, born-again Christians, blacks, Hispanics, labor union members.

Coded as 1 = not favorable enough; 0 = just about right or too favorable.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

Group membership (derived from the following items).

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what would you say?

What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion?

(If Protestant or Catholic) Do you consider yourself a born-again Christian or not?

What race do you consider yourself?

Are you of Spanish or Hispanic origin or descent?

Do you or anyone else in your household belong to a union?

Group membership coded 1 = no; 2 = yes.

Objective media attributes (the newspaper named as most familiar to respondents was coded for these variables).

Competition in market. 1 (low) through 5 (high).

Chain ownership. 1 = yes; 2 = no.

Whether newspaper has ombudsman or reader representative. 1 = yes; 2 = no.

Circulation size. 1 = small (0–40,000); 2 = medium (40,001–100,000); 3 = large (100,001 +).

Political distance. 1 = close; 2 = moderately distant; 3 = very distant.

Perceived media attributes.

Some daily newspapers have people called "ombudsmen" or "readers' representatives" who are responsible for handling complaints from readers. As far as you know, is there a person like that at the daily newspaper you are most familiar with? 1= yes; 2 = no.

Is the company that owns that newspaper a large company that owns many newspapers and other types of businesses—or is it a fairly small company? 1 = small; 2 = large.

As far as you know, is the daily newspaper you're the most familiar with a locally owned newspaper, or is it owned by an outside company? 1 = locally owned; 2 = outside company.

Demographics.

What is the highest grade of school you have completed? Coded by year, 3–23.

Thinking about your total household income in 1984, was the total income under $5,000; between $5,000 and $10,000; between $10,000 and $15,000; between $15,000 and $20,000; between $20,000 and $25,000; between $25,000 and $30,000; between $30,000 and $35,000; between $35,000 and $50,000; between $50,000 and $75,000; or over $75,000? Coded by category, 1 (under $5,000) through 10 ($75,000+).

What is your age? Coded in years, 18–86.

Sex. 1 = male, 2 = female.

General skepticism.

I'm going to name some institutions in this country. For each one I'd like to ask: As far as the *people running* these institutions are concerned, would you say you have (1) a great deal of confidence, (2) only some confidence, or (3) hardly any confidence in them? Banks and financial institutions, organized religion, education, executive branch of government, organized labor, Congress, U.S. Supreme Court.

I also have a list of occupations, and I'd like you to rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in each of these occupations. The categories are (1) high; (2) average; (3) low. Members of the clergy, police, doctors, advertising executives, public school teachers, and used car salesmen.

Index coded from 1 (low trust) through 10 (high trust).

Skepticism toward media (composed of the following five Likert-scaled items and one final paired-choice item).

News reporters usually try to be as objective as they possibly can be.

Reporters frequently overdramatize the news.

The news media put too much emphasis on what is wrong with America and not enough on what is right.

The news media often make people accused of crimes look guilty before they are tried in court.

The news media give more coverage to stories that support their own point of view than to those that don't.

Most news media are careful to separate fact from opinion. [or] Most news media don't do a very good job of letting people know what is fact and what is opinion.

Index coded from 1 (low trust) through 10 (high trust).

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ONE THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE
COGNITIVE CONSISTENCY, POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE, AND THE 1980 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

DAVID J. LANOUE

Abstract Despite high expectations, students of the 1960 and 1976 presidential debates were unable to find much evidence that these events significantly affected voters' candidate preferences. As a result, scholars have turned increasingly to cognitive consistency theories to explain viewers' reactions (or nonreactions) to debates. This article argues that one key mediating variable determining whether or not voters are influenced by debates is their level of political knowledge. Looking at the largely ignored 1980 Carter-Reagan debate, we find that voters with generally low levels of knowledge are particularly affected by the debate, and significant shifts in candidate preferences do occur among this group. The evidence suggests that the debate was an important factor in Ronald Reagan's bid to unseat his Democratic opponent.

Surprise, and perhaps even a little disappointment, can be found in the words of those observers who reported on the 1960 and 1976 presidential debates. The "great debates" failed, by and large, to produce important effects on the public's candidate preferences. In their summary of 31 studies of the 1960 debates, E. Katz and J. J. Feldman (1962, p. 211) conclude that "it is very difficult to say" whether the Kennedy-Nixon encounters affected the outcome of the election. In a similar analysis of research dealing with the 1976 debates, D. O. Sears and S. H. Chaffee (1979) characterize the effects of the Ford-Carter confrontations as "limited." More recently, Walter Mondale's per-

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:168–184 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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ceived victory over Ronald Reagan in their first 1984 debate gave the Democratic challenger only a small, temporary boost in the polls, while the 1988 debates had virtually no impact on the Bush-Dukakis race (Lanoue 1991; Lanoue and Schrott 1991).[1]

Rational voters, it was once assumed, would use presidential debates as an opportunity to judge the candidates side by side, evaluating their issue positions and leadership qualifications. The electorate, however, does not always react as expected. Instead, many voters make up their minds well before debates are held (although that does not stop most of them from tuning in). Moreover, when their views differ from those espoused by their favorite candidate, they are more likely to alter their own opinions than to reconsider their vote choice (Abramowitz 1978), or simply to project their attitudes onto their preferred nominee.

As a result of these findings, political scientists have become increasingly reliant on cognitive consistency theory to explain public reactions to presidential debates. Preexisting candidate preferences and party loyalties, it would seem, provide most voters with durable filters through which only supportive information may pass (or through which less supportive data are interpreted in a positive light). "Only when the powerful impacts of prior beliefs and preferences are considered," argue L. Sigelman and C. K. Sigelman (1984, p. 627), is it possible to understand the limited findings uncovered by political scientists. Thus, reinforcement is supposedly the only major effect of debates on viewers.

It would, of course, be unwise to trivialize previous findings that debates reinforce preferences. Reinforcement may, for example, turn tentative candidate preferences into actual votes. In its absence, uncertainties about candidates may well multiply, causing erosion in the support of front-runners and defection from the ranks of underdogs. Separate studies have argued that debate-induced reinforcement strengthened bonds between wavering Democrats and their party's nominees in both 1960 and 1976 (Hagner and Rieselbach 1978; Lang and Lang 1962). Were reinforcement the only measurable effect of debates on viewers, this alone would make them electorally consequential.

We should not, however, rule out the possibility that debates can also have important effects on voters' candidate preferences. Not all debates, of course, will produce such effects. Further, not all viewers will be identically influenced by any given debate. Thus, it is important

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1. The margin choosing Mondale as the "winner" of the first 1984 debate, according to the *New York Times* poll of October 14, 1984, was 66 percent to 17 percent.

to determine which kinds of debates have the greatest impact and which types of viewers are most subject to their effects.

One key factor in assessing the effects of debates on viewers should be voters' cognitive understanding of politics and their information levels about the candidates, parties, and issues (for our purposes, we will refer to these traits collectively as "political knowledge"). It is quite possible that knowledgeable voters possess more consistent and deeply rooted political views than others in the electorate (although Neuman [1986] takes issue with this perspective). We expect, in any event, that such voters would be less influenced by a single evening of political rhetoric, however dramatic and well publicized it might be.

Knowledge-poor voters, on the other hand, may not enjoy the same confidence in their political views. Their candidate preferences stand on a much shakier cognitive foundation. Even if they watch debates for reasons having nothing to do with vote choice (e.g., an interest in viewing a dramatic confrontation), they may still be moved by what they see and hear. A particularly strong or weak performance by one candidate (or a performance so described in subsequent media analysis) may undermine—or enhance—such a voter's commitment to his or her original choice. If, as Geer (1988) argues, the acquisition of new information motivates changes in the vote, then these are the voters most likely to learn something new from the encounter.

The 1980 Carter-Reagan Debate

President Jimmy Carter and former California governor Ronald Reagan, the Democratic and Republican nominees for president, met for the only time during the 1980 campaign in Cleveland, Ohio, on October 28, exactly 1 week before election day. This was not technically the first debate held during the general election campaign. Previously, Reagan had debated independent candidate John Anderson (a former Republican) in Baltimore. Anderson, however, was excluded from the Cleveland debate by the event's sponsor, the nonpartisan League of Women Voters. Carter, who feared a loss of moderate and liberal voters to Anderson, insisted on a one-on-one match with the Republican nominee. Reagan, for his part, resisted Carter's demand until his advisors decided that a debate might help arrest the Californian's slipping support in the polls and reassure voters worried about his commitment to world peace (Smith 1982).

Certain features of the 1980 debate are particularly attractive for the purposes of this research. First, occurring only 7 days before the election, this debate—and its media coverage—were presumably still on the minds of voters as they cast their ballots. This would likely maximize the direct effects of the debate on the election's outcome. More important, however, it increases the likelihood that viewers' impressions of the debate, as reported in postelection surveys, will be relatively uncontaminated by faded recollections.

Another important advantage of the 1980 election from a research standpoint is that it included only one debate between the Democratic and Republican nominees (Reagan's earlier debate with Anderson received neither the audience nor the attention given the typical general election encounter). Much of the research involving the 1960 and 1976 debates has disagreed about which debate in a series is the most important and how to identify the effects of individual debates on electoral outcomes. Some, for example, have argued that a "primacy" effect exists, in which the first debate has the greatest net impact on voters (Katz and Feldman 1962). Others have suggested that debate order is less important than debate content, and that the truly influential confrontations are those that contain dramatic moments, such as major candidate "gaffes" (Geer 1988). Because Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter debated only once in 1980, we can avoid these troubling (although potentially consequential) side issues.

The Concept of Debate "Winner"

Finally, the 1980 debate was widely perceived to have had a "winner." The concept of winner is, of course, fairly elusive. It is made up, in part, of viewers' reactions to the issue positions and personal styles of the candidates. It is, however, also a function of postdebate media coverage (Lang and Lang 1979). Indeed, there is some evidence that, after a cautious beginning, the media in 1980 began to reach the conclusion that Ronald Reagan had fared best in Cleveland. One contributor to that emerging view was ABC's notorious—and invalid—900-number survey, which was the first postdebate "poll" to air nationally and which reported that a majority of Americans saw Reagan as the "victor."

The SRC/National Election Study data are consistent with general expectations about partisan influences on debate evaluations. The overwhelming majority of Republican viewers in the sample (79 percent) agreed that Reagan, on the basis of his debate performance, "impressed (them) as being the more qualified to be president" (only 9 percent chose Carter).[2] Among Democrats, Carter's "lead" over Reagan was a more narrow 49–27 percent. Finally, 53 percent of independent voters were most impressed by Reagan's peformance, while 26 percent favored his Democratic opponent. While these numbers clearly favor Reagan overall, they also demonstrate the considerable effects of predebate preferences.

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[2] The wording used in this paragraph comes directly from the 1980 SRC codebook and presumably indicates the exact wording of the question and options.

In fact, the figures from 1980 are generally consistent with those of other so-called one-sided debates.[3] One question, of course, remains: Just what does it mean to "win" a debate? The findings above indicate that winners are selected on the basis of both actual debate performance and media commentary (with the latter perhaps making the biggest difference). In addition, nominees' personal styles seem to influence voters' postdebate analyses more than their issue positions (Lang and Lang 1979; Sears and Chaffee 1979).

The purpose of this article then, is to determine whether such perceived debating success is, indeed, electorally consequential. I will test the conventional wisdom that the 1980 Carter-Reagan debate was unusually influential in that regard. I may, to some extent, determine the accuracy of claims by both parties that "the Carter-Reagan debate accounted for much of the last-minute surge in Reagan support" (Asher 1988, p. 182).

Data Sources

I can now assess the effects of the 1980 presidential debate on relative candidate evaluations. I will measure the dependent variable, candidate preference, in two steps, employing thermometer score ratings. For this and all other variables, data were collected from the 1980 SRC National Election Study (only respondents who actually voted are included in the analyses below). First, each respondent's rating of Jimmy Carter is subtracted from his or her rating of Ronald Reagan. Since voters were asked to rate the nominees twice, once before and once after the debate, there will be indicators of "predebate candidate lead" and "postdebate candidate lead." For the second step, one simply subtracts predebate lead from postdebate lead.[4] The resulting measure will help us determine which candidate gained (or lost) in each voter's estimation over the final weeks of the campaign. Positive scores will indicate movement in favor of Reagan, while negative scores will suggest movement toward Carter. The thermometer score is a particularly useful instrument here; it has been found to be highly correlated with actual vote choice, while also providing a valid measure of the strength of voters' preferences (Abramowitz, Lanoue, and Ramesh 1988).

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[3] In 1960, various studies declared John F. Kennedy "winner" of his first debate with Richard Nixon by margins ranging from 2 percent to 49 percent (Katz and Feldman 1962); the Associated Press poll reported a 10-point edge for Jimmy Carter (40 percent to 30 percent) after his second 1976 debate with Gerald Ford (Sears and Chaffee 1979), which grew substantially after news coverage of Ford's Eastern Europe "gaffe" (Steeper 1978); and, in 1984, the *New York Times* reported on October 14 that Walter Mondale had "beaten" Ronald Reagan in their first debate 66 percent to 17 percent, according to respondents.

[4] For these thermometer ratings, respondents are asked to rate the nominees on a scale from 0 to 100. Scores between 0 and 50 "degrees" indicate that the subject feels "cool" (negatively) toward the candidate, while ratings between 50 and 100 suggest that the

Some complications, of course, do arise in 1980 because of John Anderson's presence in the race. Nevertheless, of those who favored Carter over Reagan (in terms of thermometer scores), 85 percent voted for the Democratic nominee, while only 3 percent cast ballots for his Republican challenger. Likewise, of those favoring Reagan, fully 90 percent voted for the former California governor, and only 3 percent ended up supporting the incumbent president. Thus this measure does appear to suit the purposes of this research.

This article is primarily concerned with the role of debate evaluations and political knowledge, and how they influence the way viewers evaluate presidential candidates. In this case, I wish to measure voters' level of information about the personalities and issues in American politics. One would expect knowledge to be a function of, among other things, educational training and political interest.

For the purposes of the present study, one major independent variable will be operationalized as the voter's ability to recognize and provide information about major American political figures from the 1980 campaign. In the SRC survey, 13 politicians were named, ranging in familiarity from Carter, Reagan, and Ted Kennedy to the relatively obscure Representative Philip Crane of Illinois (who briefly ran for the GOP nomination that year) and Patrick Lucey (the former Democratic governor of Wisconsin who served as John Anderson's general election running mate). Responses were coded (by the SRC) as 0 if the subject had "never heard of (the) candidate"; 1 if the subject had

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respondent feels "warm" (positively) toward the nominee. In the postelection differenced thermometer ratings, two-thirds of the sample recorded scores between −40 (i.e., their rating of Carter was 40 points higher than their rating of Reagan), and +40 (giving the challenger a 40-"degree" edge). The relationship between relative thermometer scores and the vote choice can be seen in the following comparison: of those respondents with scores of −70 or lower, 100 percent voted for Carter; of those scoring 50 or higher, 100 percent voted for Reagan. Other figures for comparison: for the group scoring between −50 and −59, 91 percent backed the Democratic incumbent; between −20 and −29, Carter won 83 percent of the votes; between −10 and −19, 76 percent. When the candidates were ranked identically, Carter received 52 percent; when Reagan led by between 20 and 30 points, Carter got 13 percent; between 30 and 49, the Democrat garnered only 1 percent. Symbolically, we may represent our measure as follows: $(RR_t - JC_t) - (RR_{t-1} - JC_{t-1})$, where RR and JC are respondents' thermometer ratings of Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, respectively.

"heard of (the) candidate but feels (s/he) doesn't know much about him"; and 2 if the respondent had "heard of (the) candidate and feels (s/he) knows something about him." For each subject, scores on the 13 items are added, creating a scale of political knowledge with a range from 0 to 26 (in fact, no respondent scored below 5, while several received perfect scores).[5]

In order to establish debate-related effects, I will create a variable measuring how each respondent evaluated the event. In this way, both types of possible debate effects, conversion and reinforcement, can be considered separately. Reinforcement should be most likely to occur when viewers name their favorite candidate—for whatever reason—as the debate winner. We will refer to such voters below as "consistent."

By contrast, conversion is most likely when viewers do not see their preferred nominee as the superior debater.[6] These respondents will be labeled "inconsistent." For this purpose, I will measure prior candidate preference in terms of predebate thermometer scores—respondents will be labeled Carter supporters if their predebate rating of the Democratic nominee exceeds that of the Republican challenger, and Reagan supporters if it does not.[7]

I hypothesize that consistent and inconsistent voters should react differently to the debate and also that the strength of these reactions will be influenced by each voter's level of political knowledge. Thus, two sets of interactive variables are specified. One variable (CONSISTENT) will be scored 1 for all consistent voters and 0 otherwise, and another measure (INCONSISTENT) will be scored 1 for all inconsistent voters and 0 elsewhere. In addition, one further adjustment in these variables must be made to account for the fact that the dependent variable (change in candidate preference) is positive for pro-Reagan movement and negative for pro-Carter movement. Consistent predebate Carter supporters and inconsistent predebate Reagan backers will be scored as 1 (since we expect any debate effects in these cases to favor the Democratic nominee). In this way, pro-Carter and pro-Reagan debate effects will not cancel one another out.

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[5] Once again, the wording used in this paragraph comes directly from the 1980 SRC codebook, presumably indicating the exact wording of the question and options. The validity of this measure can be determined by conducting a regression analysis, determining which factors predict high and low knowledge levels. Such an analysis reveals that education and interest are both highly significant predictors of political knowledge, suggesting that the variable is measuring the desired concept.

[6] Voters are labeled as "inconsistent" if their predebate favorite candidate was not chosen as the "winner." Strictly speaking, then, a voter could be considered "inconsistent" even if she or he rated the debate a draw. The logic here is that, given the expected strength of the drive toward cognitive consistency, any debate performance by a favored candidate which was not considered to be superior was probably disappointing to the viewer. For the sake of brevity, I will refer to the predebate favorite of the "inconsistent" voter as the "loser" and to his opponent as the "winner" and will analyze the data accordingly.

[7] If the respondent rated both candidates equally, then candidate preference is determined by party identification. An unaffiliated respondent in this situation would be labeled as truly undecided. In this sample 249 voters (or 26 percent of the total) are labeled as "inconsistent."

Further, both of these variables will be multiplied by the measure of political knowledge to create two interactive variables, CONSISTENT*KNOW and INCONSISTENT*KNOW. These variables, if significant, will suggest that knowledge levels interact with debate evaluations to enhance the effect of the event on certain voters. As noted above, we expect that lower knowledge levels will, in general, be associated with greater debate effects.

Finally, a number of control variables are also employed. These variables include indicators of partisanship, race, gender, and income. In addition, I control for voters' assessments of the major issues of the 1980 election, the faltering economy, and America's supposedly weakened position in the world. In the first instance, a variable (ECON) is created which combines evaluations of Carter's handling of inflation and unemployment. For the second measure (FOREIGN), I combine voters' judgments about Carter's handling of the Iran hostage crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.[8]

Results

In order to test the effects of debates on viewers, we regress our differenced thermometer score measure on the independent variables named above. Table 1 reports the results of this analysis. This table makes it clear that "inconsistent" debate watchers were the most strongly affected by the event. The average increase in the winner's relative thermometer rating for inconsistent viewers is approximately 30 points. Consistent debate watchers were affected as well, according to table 1: the average gain for the winning candidate among this group is about 20 points.

Moreover, levels of knowledge appear quite important in both cases. Our interactive variables (INCONSISTENT*KNOW and CONSISTENT*KNOW)

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[8] The variables were chosen because they were all significantly correlated (at the .01 level) with predebate candidate preference. ECON is measured on a scale of 0 to 2, measuring whether respondents approved of Carter's handling of inflation, unemployment, both, or neither. FOREIGN is measured on a scale of 0 to 2, measuring whether respondents approved of Carter's handling of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iran hostage crisis, both, or neither. Gender is scored 2 for females and 1 for males. Race is scored 0 for whites and 1 for all others. Partisanship is scored 1 for all Republican identification, −1 for all Democratic loyalty, and 0 otherwise. Income is grouped as follows: 1 = $0–$10,000; 2 = $10,000–$20,000; and 3 = more than $20,000. All control variables are taken from the preelection survey.

Table 1. Estimates for Model of Pre- to Postelection Candidate Preferences

Variable	Coefficient	SE	*t*-ratio
INCONSISTENT	30.4125	4.7572	3.12***
INCONSISTENT*KNOW	−.7695	.4577	−1.68**
CONSISTENT	20.2206	8.1003	2.50***
CONSISTENT*KNOW	−.9801	.3736	−2.62***
GENDER	−.2278	1.8490	−.12
RACE/ETHNICITY	−8.2275	3.1232	−2.63***
INCOME	1.5350	1.2045	1.27*
FOREIGN POLICY	−.6272	1.3074	−.48
ECONOMIC POLICY	.0964	1.2543	.08
PARTY ID	1.5311	1.3736	1.11
INTERCEPT	2.1395	4.7572	.55

NOTE.—$R^2 = .08$; $N = 861$.
* Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .10$).
** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .05$).
*** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .01$).

are both significant at the .05 level (one tailed), with coefficients of nearly one point each. In addition, they both display negative coefficients. This indicates that political knowledge interacts with voters' debate reactions to suggest a stronger overall effect in the case of voters with lower levels of information. Compare, for example, voters with scores of 10 on our information index to those with scores of 25. For inconsistent voters who fall into the lower range of political knowledge, the full effect of the debate is nearly 23 "degrees" in favor of the winning candidate, clearly a very substantial shift; for those in the higher range of information, the corresponding effect is only about 11 degrees. Likewise, for the sample of consistent voters, respondents with lower information scores record, on the average, a gain of over 10 degrees in favor of the debate winner; for those with higher information levels, however, the effect washes away completely.

We should also note that one control variable is significantly related to last-minute changes in voters' thermometer score ratings, and another shows some evidence of significance. Minority voters, during the last weeks of the campaign, show substantial movement away from Ronald Reagan and in favor of Jimmy Carter. On the average, these voters (mostly African-American and Latino) moved a little over 8 degrees toward the Democratic nominee over this period. In addition, income may have had some effect on last-minute movement in public opinion. Our income coefficient is significant at the .10 level, one tailed, and is positive (indicating last-minute polarization of the wealthy and poor, respectively, in favor of Reagan and Carter).

The alert reader may be surprised to see that economic and foreign policy concerns do not display terribly strong effects on thermometer score ratings. Bear in mind, however, that our indicator of candidate preferences, measured as it is, controls for predebate candidate evaluations here. Thus, any effects shown in table 1 represent the *additional* impact of these issues on public opinion between the time of the pretest survey (conducted in late September and early October) and the posttest survey (administered roughly a month later). The issues of inflation, unemployment, the hostage crisis, and Afghanistan certainly—and profoundly—affected predebate evaluations of the candidates. Table 1, however, simply measures their marginal effects during the final weeks of the campaign.

Finally, it is important to point out that this model may also be used to demonstrate the effects of the Carter-Reagan debate on actual vote choice. Indeed, when such an analysis is conducted (using probit methodology), one finds significant effects only in the case of inconsistent voters (see Appendix table A1). This is not at all surprising. Consistent voters are those who have had their predebate preferences reinforced. There is no reason, therefore, to believe that the debate would change their actual vote choice (although it might bolster their perceptions of their favorite candidate). For inconsistent voters, on the other hand, the debate "outcome" challenges their previous feelings about the nominees, thus provoking a reassessment. In any event, in this case both the INCONSISTENT variable and the INCONSISTENT*KNOW variable are statistically significant.

Two issues of potential concern must be raised here. First, as is often the case when using interactive dummy variables, substantial collinearity may be a problem. The correlations between our debate reaction variables (CONSISTENT and INCONSISTENT) and their interactive counterparts (CONSISTENT*KNOW and INCONSISTENT*KNOW) are each over .90. Although this problem does not bias OLS coefficients, it does make them potentially unreliable. Moreover, it also may wreak havoc with slope standard errors, thus making significance more difficult to measure.

In addition, preliminary analysis suggests that the effects of knowledge may not be entirely linear. Rather, one finds evidence that the debate has its greatest effects on those voters with lower levels of knowledge, but not those at the very bottom of the scale. This should not be unexpected. Presumably, the most knowledgeable voters gain the smallest marginal increase in new information from viewing the event. Voters with extremely limited knowledge, by contrast, may not be able to understand and evaluate the merits of the candidates' arguments or to determine (even subjectively) when one debater has "scored points" against another. Thus, the debate should have its greatest effect on voters for whom it provides new and valuable information, but who also possess enough basic political knowledge to follow the proceedings.

We would, of course, not be the first to argue that voters with the lowest levels of political information are less subject to campaign effects. As early as 1947, Hyman and Sheatsley found that public information campaigns are largely disregarded by the least knowledgeable citizens. Converse (1964), in his ground-breaking study on levels of conceptualization, notes that a significant number of voters fali into the category he labels, "No Issue Content." These are people who are, for the most part, oblivious to political issues. Their ranks include party loyalists who "have no idea what the party [stands] for," those "indicating disinterest in parties more generally," and others who "paid too little attention" to parties or candidates to be able to say anything about them (p. 217). Clearly, such voters are not likely to be affected by events in a political campaign which they have probably ignored. Zaller (1990, pp. 138–39) presents more recent evidence that citizens with low levels of "awareness . . . will be exposed to few persuasive messages," thus leading to "higher no-opinion rates" and less ideological consistency.

For the purposes of this study, I determine empirically that the category showing the strongest effects includes those voters whose knowledge scores range from 13 to 20 (i.e., those between roughly the fifth and fortieth percentile). I will refer to this as the "lower-middle" level of information and will give these voters a score of 1 on the revised "knowledge" variable (all other voters will receive a score of 0). As a result, the two interactive variables (CONSISTENT*KNOW and INCONSISTENT*KNOW) will also be dummies and will take on values of either 1, −1, or 0.[9]

In order to verify the findings above, I will test the effects of the debate on viewers, using this new measure of political knowledge (and otherwise retaining the same model employed above). Table 2 reports the results of this analysis. This table reconfirms that inconsistent viewers were the most strongly influenced by the Cleveland debate.

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[9] This choice was made after estimating the model (see table 1) for a number of different groupings of knowledge levels. This grouping displayed the strongest effects on candidate evaluations. We also find, in a series of difference of means tests, that the group scoring 13–20 on the knowledge index was the group in which the greatest significant differences were found in our candidate preference measure between debate watchers and nonwatchers (among predebate Carter supporters). After recoding, 336 respondents (or 34 percent of the total) were given scores of 1 on this measure.

Table 2. Estimates for Model of Pre- to Postelection Candidate Preferences (with Knowledge Variable Recoded)

Variable	Coefficient	SE	*t*-ratio
INCONSISTENT	10.7144	2.2873	4.68***
INCONSISTENT*KNOW	11.1411	3.8561	2.89***
CONSISTENT	−1.7655	1.8137	−.97
CONSISTENT*KNOW	3.4418	2.8576	1.20
GENDER	−.5936	1.8547	−.32
RACE/ETHNICITY	−8.2490	3.0723	−2.69***
INCOME	1.5506	1.2083	1.28*
FOREIGN POLICY	−.7926	1.3059	−.61
ECONOMIC POLICY	.2580	1.2549	.21
PARTY ID	1.3030	1.3747	.95
INTERCEPT	2.4270	4.7696	.51

NOTE.—R^2 = .08; N = 861.
* Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .10$).
*** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .01$).

The average increase in the debate winner's relative thermometer score among inconsistent voters is nearly 11 degrees.

In addition, once again, within this group, levels of knowledge appear very important. Our interactive variable (INCONSISTENT*KNOW) is also clearly significant, with a coefficient of just over 11 points on the relative thermometer scale. This indicates that information level interacts with voters' debate reactions to create an even stronger overall effect. For inconsistent voters who fall into the lower-middle range of political knowledge, the full effect of the debate is nearly 22 degrees in favor of the winning candidate, clearly a very substantial shift. The effect is less than half that strong for those not in the lower-middle category.[10] As before, the RACE variable is significant, while INCOME comes close to achieving significance.

It is interesting that the debate, according to this analysis, does not appear to have had a significant effect on consistent viewers, those who saw their favorite candidate as the debate winner. For this group, the effect is less than two points (in the "wrong"—negative—direction) and is statistically trivial. Even our interactive measure

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[10] Further analysis suggests that this effect was apparent in the case of both predebate Carter supporters and predebate Reagan backers. For the former, the full effect (INCONSISTENT*KNOW) was over 18 points in favor of Reagan; for the latter, the effect was 27 points in favor of Carter. However, because many more Carter supporters fell into the inconsistent category, the net beneficiary of these effects was the Reagan campaign.

(CONSISTENT*KNOW) fails to achieve significance, although the coefficient is a bit stronger and in the expected (positive) direction.[11]

One concern that should be addressed involves the degree of time that passes between the pretest survey, the debate, and the posttest questionnaire. Time, of course, is not neutral. Important campaign events occur over time, and voters' opinions form and crystallize over the last month of an election campaign. Thus, it is possible that some factors other than the debate may be causing the effects observed above.

If political knowledge is correlated with attentiveness to political news, as it clearly is, this might create a special problem.[12] It is possible that less attentive voters may come to a final decision late in a campaign, perhaps between the time of their pretest questionnaire and the debate itself. Thus, what we measure as an inconsistent reaction to the debate might actually be a reaction consistent with a voting decision made by the viewer after the pretest survey was completed but before the debate actually occurred. Likewise, inattentive viewers may be more likely, over time, to reconcile their debate evaluations with the outcome of the election itself. Clearly, long time lags between surveys exacerbate these problems.

The best way to deal with these issues would be to isolate only those voters who filled out their preelection surveys within one week of the debate and completed their postelection questionnaires within a week after election day. Unfortunately, given the SRC data, such a requirement yields too small a sample size with which to replicate properly the analysis above (only six respondents fall into this category). Instead, I will do the next best thing and conduct two separate analyses. The first will look exclusively at voters who filled out their pretest surveys between October 21 and October 28, 1980 (i.e., within 1 week of the debate). The second will consider only respondents who completed their postelection surveys by November 11, 1980, 1 week after the election. If our results hold up in both of these samples, we could have greater confidence in their validity. The results of these analyses may be seen in table 3.

Table 3 provides evidence that our previous findings are not spuriously produced. Among both groups, the effects of the debate on in-

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[11] When this analysis is run using actual vote choice as the dependent variable, the coefficient for INCONSISTENT is significant and the coefficient for INCONSISTENT*KNOW is in the right direction, but not significant at the .05 level. However, the overall effect on voting behavior, if indirect, is still substantial. If candidate evaluations are the most important proximate factor in predicting the vote (see Page and Jones 1979), then anything that influences them should also affect vote choice.

[12] This idea was suggested by an anonymous reviewer, to whom I am grateful.

Table 3. Estimates for Model of Pre- to Postelection Candidate Preferences (Divided by Time of Pre- and Posttest Completion)

Variable	Coefficient (Pretest: 10/21–10/28)	*t*-value	Coefficient (Posttest: 11/04–11/11)	*t*-value
INCONSISTENT	5.7449	1.30*	9.2035	2.10**
INCONSISTENT*KNOW	17.9628	2.11**	14.4822	1.82**
CONSISTENT	−3.0786	−.77	1.3727	.41
CONSISTENT*KNOW	1.3065	.22	−7.0301	−1.08
GENDER	3.5810	.92	−5.9692	−1.48*
RACE	−15.4741	−2.23**	−13.0560	−1.85**
INCOME	.0651	.03	−.0342	−.02
FOREIGN POLICY	−1.1739	−.41	−5.4922	−2.11
ECONOMIC POLICY	.5585	.20	2.5095	.98
PARTY ID	−2.9364	−1.02	−.2717	−.09
CONSTANT	−2.0373	−.21	16.3546	1.59*
R^2	.17	. . .	.14	. . .
N	(131)	. . .	(190)	. . .

* Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .10$).
** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .05$).

consistent viewers are similar to those of the previous analysis. This particularly holds for the interactive variable measuring the effects of the debate on those inconsistent viewers in the lower-middle knowledge category. In each case, the total effect for these viewers is over 23 degrees in favor of the debate winner (as opposed to the 22-point shift recorded in the overall sample). These findings give us confidence in the robustness of our earlier conclusions: it seems apparent that the debate did motivate the opinion change reported in table 1.

Finally, we should again note that the effects of the 1980 debate, demonstrated above, worked primarily to the benefit of Ronald Reagan. Of those viewers, in the preelection survey, who said that they planned to vote for Jimmy Carter, 42 percent failed to name Carter as the winner of the debate. By contrast, only 22 percent of those who expected to vote for Ronald Reagan did not choose the Republican as the winner. Perhaps most important, Reagan was the majority choice as winner among predebate undecideds. In short, the incumbent president's debate performance apparently disappointed large numbers of both his predebate supporters and his potential supporters. It is, therefore, easy to see how Carter suffered as a result of his participation.

Conclusion

Without a doubt, cognitive consistency is an important factor in explaining viewers' reactions to presidential debates. It is not, however, the controlling factor. After the 1980 debate, over one-quarter of viewers who had a candidate preference did not name their favorite candidate as the debate winner. It was this group, according to my findings, which was most heavily affected by viewing the 1980 presidential debate.

One key intervening variable in this case is political knowledge. Voters in the lower-middle category were clearly the most strongly influenced by the debate and its subsequent media coverage. With less knowledge at their disposal, it is reasonable to assume that debate-related information played a much larger role in these voters' decisions. To be sure, there is no evidence that this represents any form of "rational" voting. It is probably not so much the substance of the debate that influenced these people as the personalities of the candidates and journalists' reports of the effects of the debate on the "horse race."

For better or worse, less knowledgeable voters used this debate (and its media coverage) to gain information and insights about the candidates and campaign, which in turn influenced their preferences. It is beyond the scope of this article to determine whether this is, in a normative sense, a desirable phenomenon. The debate literature provides ample evidence that images, rather than issues, drive debate evaluations, and postdebate assessments of the nominees may be as empty of substantive content as they were prior to the event.

In addition, one should be careful not to make too much of the overall lack of reinforcement effects in the present case. While this study is consistent with other recent work which finds little actual change in attitudes among consistent viewers (Lanoue 1991), it is important to point out that reinforcing effects have been uncovered elsewhere (Hagner and Rieselbach 1978; Lang and Lang 1962). Moreover, it is possible that the experience of seeing one's preferred candidate "vanquish" the opposition strengthens a voter's determination not only to support that candidate but also to make the effort to vote on election day and to attempt to persuade other citizens. In that sense, winning debaters may gain something from their efforts, unmeasurable in the present study, even among their original supporters.

In any case, the evidence above strongly suggests that under the right conditions, debates do matter in helping to shape candidate preferences. The relative absence of previous findings to this effect may have been influenced by many of the issues discussed above: nonadjustment for knowledge levels, the difficulties of analyzing multiple debates, and the "nondecisiveness" of earlier encounters. The 1980 debate suffered from none of these problems. Nevertheless, further research is clearly indicated in order to elucidate these issues.

Appendix

Table A1. Probit Estimates for Model of Pre- to Postelection Vote Change

Variable	Coefficient	SE	*t*-ratio
INCONSISTENT	1.8668	.6400	2.92***
INCONSISTENT*KNOW	−.0692	.0298	−2.32**
CONSISTENT	−.6249	.5217	−1.20
CONSISTENT*KNOW	.0427	.0243	1.76*
GENDER	.0672	.1234	.54
RACE/ETHNICITY	−1.5479	.1397	−11.08***
INCOME	.0346	.0802	.43
FOREIGN POLICY	.1205	.0868	1.39*
ECONOMIC POLICY	.1290	.0811	1.59*
PARTY ID	−.2855	.0869	−3.28***
INTERCEPT	−.1496	.2420	−.62

NOTE.—$N = 803$. The dependent variable here is scored 1 if respondents' reported vote choice (from the postelection survey) is different from their expected vote choice (from the preelection survey). It is scored 0 otherwise. This measure of change in vote choice corresponds to the thermometer score variable used above. In order to preserve proper causal direction, polarity was reversed on all control variables for respondents who moved away from Ronald Reagan and/or toward Jimmy Carter, including those who supported Ronald Reagan before the debate and then switched to, say, John Anderson or chose not to vote (thus, e.g., the negative coefficient for the RACE/ETHNICITY variable suggests last-minute movement by minority voters in favor of Carter). When this analysis is replicated without transforming the variables, using regression analysis and a three-point measure of vote change (1 = pro-Reagan/anti-Carter; −1 = pro-Carter/anti-Reagan; 0 = no change), the substantive findings are the same as those reported here.

* Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .10$).

** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .05$).

*** Coefficient is significant, one tailed ($p < .01$).

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PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATION

CHERYL LYN HERRERA
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Abstract The political views of citizens should be reflected in the government of a democratic society. Typically, citizens' views are expressed by their elected representatives. We used the Center for Political Studies (CPS) 1986 National Election Study and a mail survey of the U.S. House of Representatives to look at representation collectively and dyadically. Collectively, we find some degree of congruence between leaders and followers. However, there are significant differences between them on half of the issue items, with the leaders usually taking more extreme positions than the followers. We looked at leaders and followers dyadically in 33 districts using Achen's measures of representation. We found that the representatives' views are fairly close to those of their constituents, that representatives are efficient at positioning themselves at the mean constituent position, and that representatives respond to shifts in liberalism/conservatism in their districts.

Legislative representation has been the topic of numerous political debates. One controversy centers on the role of the legislator in relation to his or her constituency. Are legislators free to act as they please? Should they use their own judgment to do what is best for their constituents? Or are representatives, by definition, required to reflect accurately the opinions of their constituents? We respond "no"

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Public Opinion Quarterly Volume 56:185–205 © 1992 by the American Association for Public Opinion Research
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to the first question and argue that legislators should use their own judgment as well as reflect public interest and opinion. This is consistent with Pitkin's definition of political representation, which includes the idea that legislators should act in the interest of those represented and that "they should look after the public interest and be responsive to public opinion, except insofar as non-responsiveness can be justified in terms of the public interest" (Pitkin 1967, p. 224).

In democracies, citizens' views are expressed by their elected representatives. Thus, most empirical studies of representation focus on the extent of agreement between political leaders and the mass public. Agreement between legislators and the public can be conceived of collectively or dyadically (Weissberg 1978). Collective representation refers to a collective body representing a people, while dyadic representation refers to a particular legislator and the constituency that elected that legislator.

We shall employ both dyadic and collective measures of representation in order to provide as much information about the representativeness of members of Congress as possible. We use the opinions of the members of the U.S. House of Representatives, rather than the roll-call votes, because we believe that representatives' opinions serve as proxies for their behavior. Studies show a high correlation between congressional attitudes and roll-call behavior (Smith, Herrera, and Herrera 1990; Sullivan and O'Connor 1972). In addition, "congressional attitudes are important in their own right, functioning in the long gestation period before roll-calls, setting the agenda, and framing the specific questions to be decided by a roll-call" (Backstrom 1977, p. 412).

Background

Many have sought to measure the collective representativeness of political leaders in our society (see, e.g., Backstrom 1977; Bishop and Frankovic 1981; Converse and Pierce 1986; Jackson, Brown, and Bositis 1982; Kirkpatrick 1975; McClosky, Hoffman, and O'Hara 1960; Weissberg 1978; Wittkopf and Maggiotto 1983). The McClosky, Hoffman, and O'Hara (1960) study was the first to look at collective representation from a leader-follower perspective. This study, however, examined only the representativeness of party leaders and followers. McClosky, Hoffman, and O'Hara found, surprisingly, that the Republican followers' views were better represented by the Democratic leaders than by the Republican leaders.

Several researchers have also addressed representation dyadically (see, e.g., Achen 1978; Erikson 1978; Luttbeg 1968; Miller and Stokes

1966; Page et al. 1984). Miller and Stokes looked at constituency influence in Congress. The authors measured the extent of policy agreement between legislator and district. They found the following: (1) a high level of agreement between representative and district in the area of civil rights, (2) a fairly high level of agreement on social and economic welfare issues, and (3) a low level of agreement on foreign involvement (Miller and Stokes 1966).

In 1978 both Achen and Erikson duplicated the 1966 work of Miller and Stokes. Erikson found that Miller and Stokes may have underestimated the extent of congressional representation since their measures of constituency opinion based on simulation were shown to correlate highly with congressional behavior. Achen, on the other hand, developed three new measures of representation and used the Miller-Stokes data to demonstrate that (1) the winners were less representative than the losers on two of the three measures and (2) all issue dimensions were approximately equally well represented, with civil rights having no special advantage.

Weissberg (1978) used the Miller-Stokes data to examine representation collectively. Weissberg found that the public was better represented collectively than dyadically. He then concluded that "collective representation will never be worse than dyadic representation" (p. 547). Hurley (1982), however, has shown that Weissberg's measures have much to do with that conclusion and suggests that collective representation need not be better than dyadic.

Some of the collective and dyadic studies can be criticized on two other fronts. First, there is the problem of question wording. Several investigators argued that questions should be phrased differently for elites than for the masses because elites would be uncomfortable answering the simplistic questions posed to the masses. Other researchers simply did not have matching surveys available. Thus most of the leader-follower research is based on studies in which more sophisticated language is used for the elites (i.e., Backstrom 1977; Bishop and Frankovic 1981; Jackson, Brown, and Bositis 1982; Miller and Stokes 1966; and Page et al. 1984). The more sophisticated questions yielded results different from those obtained from questions containing less sophisticated language. The difference in the results may have been the result of elite-mass differences or differences in the question wording.

Closely linked to the problem of question wording is that of question format. Bishop and his colleagues discovered that the "agree-disagree" Likert question format yields substantially lower levels of attitude consistency (liberals taking liberal positions and conservatives taking conservative positions) than balanced format questions (Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuchfarber 1978; Bishop, Tuchfarber, and Oldendick 1978; Bishop et al. 1978; Bishop et al. 1979). Moreover, Likert items may produce biased answers because some people have a tendency to agree with questions regardless of their content (Schuman and Presser 1981). To compound the problem this poses for representation research, some researchers used Likert items for the mass public and balanced items for the elites. Miller and Stokes (1966), for instance, used only Likert items for their mass sample; however, they used three balanced items, three more-same-less spending items, and only one Likert item for their elite sample.[1] In general, then, the failure to use identical questions for the elite and mass samples leaves a good deal of leader-follower research in doubt. As an alternative to the hypothesis that different results were obtained because the elites and the masses are simply different, we suggest that the differences were the result of the different questions posed to the elites and the masses.[2]

The second category of criticism regarding some elite-mass studies deals with the type of analysis used: correlational analysis (Bishop and Frankovic 1981; Erikson 1978; Jackson, Brown, and Bositis 1982; Miller and Stokes 1966; Page et al. 1984; Wittkopf and Maggiotto 1983). Achen (1977) warns against using correlations because they incorporate not only the strength of the relationship between elite and mass views but also the diversity of the sampled constituency. As Achen points out, correlations cannot be compared across samples. Two correlations can differ not because the underlying relationship has changed but because the variances in the samples differ. Therefore, correlations cannot demonstrate whether the views of representatives are closely associated with their constituents (Achen 1977, pp. 807–9).

We avoided the problem of question wording by posing nearly identical questions to leaders and followers. We use comparisons of means, and Achen's proximity, centrism, and responsiveness measures rather than correlations. And, we go one step further than previous studies by looking at representation both collectively and dyadically.

The Data

We examine representation using the Center for Political Studies (CPS) 1986 National Election Study (NES) and a survey of the U.S. House

[1] For a full description, see Smith (1990).

[2] We should note that each of the authors cited above used a unique set of questions from various issue areas. Most researchers included questions on foreign policy and social and economic issues, but the specific questions are different in each study. A few studies included questions on civil rights; a couple included abortion, crime, and/or women's issues. While there are similarities between the issue areas covered in our research and in previous research, the questions are not identical; therefore, the difference in our results compared with those of previous studies may be because of the questions asked. We do have a better selection of issues than McClosky, Hoffman, and O'Hara (1960) and perhaps others, and therefore our results are probably more valid.

of Representatives. In May and June of 1987 we conducted a mail survey of members of the U.S. House of Representatives. We received 126 completed questionnaires—after a two-wave mailing—for a completion rate of 29 percent.[3] The responses are reasonably representative; 61.7 percent of the respondents were Democrats, as compared with the actual 59.3 percent Democrats in the House. The sample is also representative in gender terms, with 4.8 percent of the sample female as compared with the 5.2 percent females in the House (Stanley and Niemi 1986, p. 183). This was well within our sampling error.[4] The representativeness of the congressional sample was also checked using Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) scores and region (Smith, Herrera, and Herrera 1990). The last section of this article analyzes representation by district, using the 33 districts in our sample that were also in the 1986 NES sample. We compared the NES respondents in those 33 districts with the rest of the sample on turnout, party identification, ideology, and seven issue items. We found only two differences statistically significant, but they were substantively trivial differences, and hence we feel confident that our sample is sufficiently representative.[5]

The survey included seven issue questions and the ideological self-placement item asked in the CPS 1986 National Election Study survey (see Appendix). The questions posed to the representatives were the same as those posed to the masses, with one exception—the phrase "or haven't you thought much about this?" was deleted from the introduction to each question. We believe that removing this phrase did not significantly alter the questions.[6]

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[3] The population consisted of 433 representatives because two seats were vacant at the time of the survey (due to the deaths of Sala Burton, D-CA, and Stewart B. McKinney, R-CT).

[4] For a full description of the sample, see Smith, Herrera, and Herrera (1990).

[5] Chi-square tests indicated statistically significant differences in likelihood of voting ($p = .02$) and in the cooperation with Russia item ($p = .03$). The subsample is slightly more likely to vote (57.7% compared to 51.2%) and slightly more liberal on the Russia item, with the largest difference being 3.5%.

[6] We are aware of the problem this small change may make in terms of the respondents who may have taken the opportunity to offer a "don't know" response (Schuman and Presser 1981, pp. 113–46; Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuchfarber 1978; Bishop, Tuchfarber, and Oldendick 1978). Our reasoning for deleting that "quasi-filter" from the introductions stems from our sense that these elites (members of Congress) must have thought about these issues as they are constantly on the legislative agenda in some form. We have empirically checked our hunch that elites will rarely use the "don't know" option by examining John Kessel's "1988 Study of Presidential Campaign Leaders" survey (1992), which included a "don't know" option on the same items appearing in our survey of Congress. With the exception of the liberal/conservative self-placement item (7.1% did not think in those terms), and the Central America item (4.3% hadn't thought much about it), the percentage of "don't know" responses never exceeded 1.4%. Since these findings probably overestimate the percentage we would have found with the more sophisticated congressional sample, and since quasi-filters can be expected to have a

As with all mail surveys, there is no guarantee that the representative actually filled out the questionnaire; a congressional staff person may have filled it out. We do not feel that this would be a serious problem in our study, however, since the staff persons should know the representative's thinking fairly well and probably share similar perspectives and level of knowledge about the issues.

Collective Representation

Our analysis begins with an examination of differences in mean responses by various groups of leaders and followers.[7] The overall differences in the mean responses of the entire leader and follower samples are shown in column 1 of table 1. All items are 7-point scales except abortion, which is a 4-point scale. Thus the maximum possible difference in means, 6.0, would occur if the leaders all took positions at one extreme and the followers all took positions at the other extreme. As can be seen, the leaders and followers differed significantly on one of the foreign affairs questions, and on all of the domestic questions. The negative signs in the table indicate that the first sample mentioned at the top of each column (leaders) is more liberal than the second sample (followers). So, in the first column we find that the leader sample is more liberal than that of the follower on six of the eight items.

Columns 2 through 5 of table 1 show what happened when we controlled for party affiliation. We decided to examine the effects of party not so much to study party differences as to examine collective representation within political parties. Since political parties are collective bodies within a broader collective (Congress) we expect that partisan followers would be better represented by their own party than by the opposing party. (See Backstrom 1977, p. 428; and Bishop and Frankovic 1981.) Indeed, this is the "best" opportunity for leaders to exhibit good collective representation since we have broken the sample down into more homogenous groups.

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smaller effect than full filters (Schuman and Presser 1981, pp. 122–25), we feel confident that the deletion of the quasi-filter from the introduction had a negligible effect both on the distributions of opinion we found and in our analyses.

[7] Throughout our discussion we refer to the relative conservative and liberal positions of leaders and followers. These references are based on codings of responses to the issue items as follows: liberal responses indicated beliefs that less should be spent on defense; the government in Washington should make every effort to help minorities; the United States should be less involved in Central America; government should provide more services even if it means more spending; the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living; we should cooperate with Russia; and abortion should always be permitted as a matter of personal choice. The conservative responses were the opposite positions on the scales shown in the Appendix.

Table 1. Difference in Means for House Members and the Public for Issues and Ideological Self-Placement

	Total Leaders to Total Followers (1)	Democratic Leaders to Democratic Followers (2)	Republican Leaders to Republican Followers (3)	Democratic Leaders to Republican Followers (4)	Republican Leaders to Democratic Followers (5)
Defense spending	−.235	−.629**	.376*	−1.419**	1.166**
	(.135)	(.152)	(.180)	(.144)	(.181)
Central America	.325	−.361*	1.410**	−1.201**	2.250**
	(.172)	(.028)	(.224)	(.171)	(.222)
Russia	−.770**	−1.227**	.088	−1.737**	.598**
	(.157)	(.170)	(.234)	(.169)	(.233)
Minority aid	−.834**	−1.320**	−.095	−1.950**	.535**
	(.142)	(.169)	(.204)	(.170)	(.098)
Government services	.566**	.090	1.353**	−.880**	2.323**
	(.143)	(.140)	(.165)	(.143)	(.162)
Standard of living	−.459**	−.954	.238	−1.894**	1.178**
	(.170)	(.187)	(.240)	(.188)	(.238)
Abortion	−.437**	−.769	.211	−.739**	.181
	(.130)	(.153)	(.215)	(.155)	(.214)
Ideology	−.205	.762**	.775**	−1.712**	1.725**
	(.138)	(.151)	(.150)	(.152)	(.150)

NOTE.—Entries are difference in means test results. Negative scores indicate that the first sample listed is more liberal than its comparison group. Positive scores indicate that the first sample listed is more conservative than its comparison group. Standard errors are in parentheses.

* Difference is significant at $p < .05$.

** Difference is significant at $p < .01$.

We found that the Democratic leaders and Democratic followers differed significantly on all of the foreign affairs questions, on one domestic question, and on the ideological self-placement question (see col. 2). The leaders gave more liberal responses on all of the items except government services, where the leaders and followers were essentially identical.

The Republican leaders and Republican followers differed significantly on two of the foreign affairs questions, one of the domestic questions, and the ideological self-placement question (see col. 3). The leaders gave more conservative responses than the followers on all of the items except minority aid, where the two samples were about the same.

We found that the leader-follower differences in the two parties were much the same. The average of the differences in means for the Democrats is .764, while that for the Republicans is .568. This indicates that, overall, the Republicans are actually slightly closer to their followers than the Democrats are to their followers in 1986–87. The difference is neither large nor significant.

We then compared Democratic leaders with Republican followers and Republican leaders with Democratic followers. The results are in columns 4 and 5. The Democratic leaders and Republican followers differed significantly on all of the questions, with the leaders being more liberal than the followers. The Republican leaders and Democratic followers differed significantly on all of the questions except the question on abortion, where responses by the leaders and followers were similar. The Republican leaders were more conservative than the Democratic followers on all of the issues.

The Republican followers were closer to the Democratic leaders on the Central America and government services questions. This can be seen by comparing the differences in means for these questions in columns 3 and 4. The differences in means are greater for Republican leaders and Republican followers on these two questions than for the Democratic leaders and Republican followers. On the other side, Democratic followers are closer to Republican rather than Democratic leaders on the issues of Russia, minority aid, and abortion. This can be seen by comparing the differences in means for these questions in columns 2 and 5. The differences are greater for leaders and Democratic followers on these two questions than for the Republican leaders and Democratic followers.

An issue that stands out as an exception in the previous analysis is abortion. This issue is an odd one in that responses typically do not follow the liberal-conservative pattern we would expect to find—and usually do find—on other issues. In column 5 we see that the Democratic followers differ significantly from the Republican leaders on all of the questions except abortion. This is consistent with earlier studies that found abortion to be a unique issue not conforming to traditional liberal-conservative orientations (see Miller and Jennings 1986; Page et al. 1984; Sundquist 1983). Our results confirm the position that abortion is a less partisan issue than others.

Our next step was to identify categorical groups within our population. We first controlled for gender in our analysis. We were interested to see which of two competing hypotheses would be confirmed by our analysis. In some earlier research, it was demonstrated that there were gender differences in perceptions and opinions on issues concerned with force and violence, with men being more likely than women to support violent options (Public Opinion 1982; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). On the other hand, Kirkpatrick found that, "on most issues, inter-party differences among women exceeded intra-party differences between the sexes—a fact which demonstrates the strong tendency of opinion to follow partisan rather than sexual identifications" (1975, p. 309).

Based on these studies of gender differences in attitudes and opinions, we examined whether males would do a better job representing male followers than representing female followers—especially on items involving force or violence (defense spending). We would like to have compared female leaders with female followers, but too few female leaders responded to our questionnaire (only six). Therefore, we compared all of the leaders with the male followers and all of the leaders with the female followers and controlled for party. The results are in table 2.

Among Democrats, leaders were more liberal than male followers and significantly different statistically on seven of the eight items. A similar pattern emerged when the leaders were compared with Democratic women. Democratic leaders were more liberal, and differences were statistically significant on six of eight items. Overall, there was not much difference between males and females in their respective comparisons with the Democratic leaders. The one difference between men and women was on the Central American issue, where women were slightly better represented than men.

The Republican comparisons were different in two respects. First, the leaders were more conservative than both male and female followers. Second, the differences between leaders and followers were not significantly different in most cases. The Republican leaders were more conservative than male Republican followers on six of eight items, but significantly different on only three.

Comparisons between Republican leaders and their party's female followers showed statistically significant differences on four of eight items. The only difference between this pattern and the male compari-

Table 2. Difference in Means for House Members and the Public for Issues and Ideological Self-Placement by Sex and Party

	Democratic Leaders to Democratic Male Followers	Democratic Leaders to Democratic Female Followers	Republican Leaders to Republican Male Followers	Republican Leaders to Republican Female Followers
Defense spending	−.809**	−.459**	.269	.516**
	(.217)	(.200)	(.221)	(.220)
Central America	−.384*	−.302	1.145**	1.672**
	(.255)	(.241)	(.335)	(.326)
Russia	−1.242**	−1.226**	−.018	.104
	(.587)	(.258)	(.361)	(.375)
Minority aid	−1.529**	−1.070**	−.142	−.079
	(.266)	(.255)	(.270)	(.292)
Government services	.135	.149	1.045**	1.623**
	(.184)	(.176)	(.189)	(.209)
Standard of living	−.903**	−.857**	.012	.431
	(.339)	(.311)	(.376)	(.390)
Abortion	−.739**	−.752**	.258	.264
	(.196)	(.192)	(.293)	(.294)
Ideology	−.730**	−.811**	.649**	.864**
	(.194)	(.186)	(.154)	(.153)

NOTE.—Entries are difference in means test results. Negative scores indicate that the first sample listed is more liberal than its comparison group. Positive scores indicate that the first sample listed is more conservative than its comparison group. Standard errors are in parentheses.

* Difference is significant at $p < .05$.

** Difference is significant at $p < .01$.

sons is the addition of defense spending. The two samples differed significantly, and leaders were not more liberal than female followers on the Russia question. This finding is the only one that supports previous evidence showing women as more liberal on aggression items (Public Opinion 1982; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Overall, the Republican male followers were slightly better represented than Republican females, but the pattern is almost identical. On the Democratic side, there was almost no difference between male and female representation. Together, these findings support the Kirkpatrick results.

The second category that we studied was whether the follower voted in the 1986 election or not. The results are in table 3. We hypothesized that the voting publics' views would be closer to those of the leaders than would the views of the nonvoting publics. The representatives should be more apt to follow the views of the active constituents (those who vote) than the views of the nonactive constituents (see Fenno 1978). This hypothesis was not supported by the results.

Democratic voters differed significantly from Democratic leaders on six of eight items. In seven items the leaders were more liberal than the followers. Among nonvoters, the pattern was similar, with statistically significant differences on all eight items. In sum, Democratic voters and nonvoters differed on only two items—Central America and government services—where voters were better represented.

Republican voters differed significantly from their party's leaders on half of the items compared. Republican leaders were more conservative than Republican voters on all but one item. Republican nonvoters differed from leaders on the same four items as did voters. The leaders were more conservative than the followers on all eight of the items. Overall, the comparisons between Republican leaders and Republican voters and nonvoters look almost identical.

Tables 2 and 3 reveal that party affiliation tells us much about differences in representation. Differences between males and females or voters and nonvoters seem to evaporate when party is controlled. Republican leaders in 1986–87 were doing a better job than Democrats; that is, they were closer to followers whether they were male, female, voter or nonvoter.

Conclusions regarding Collective Representation

Are our representatives doing a better or worse job of representing us now compared with previous years? In 1958 the Democratic leaders (convention delegates) were doing a better job representing their followers than the Republican leaders were at representing their followers. In 1972 the opposite was true. In 1987 we found that, for the

Table 3. Difference in Means for House Members and the Public for Issues and Ideological Self-Placement by Participation and Party

	Democratic Leaders to Voting Democratic Followers	Democratic Leaders to Nonvoting Democratic Followers	Republican Leaders to Voting Republican Followers	Republican Leaders to Nonvoting Republican Followers
Defense spending	−.608**	−.608**	.385*	.409*
	(.155)	(.164)	(.184)	(.192)
Central America	−.286	−.412*	1.403**	1.435**
	(.173)	(.182)	(.228)	(.239)
Russia	−1.222**	−1.248**	.013	.089
	(.176)	(.184)	(.239)	(.243)
Minority aid	−1.228**	−1.309**	−.220	.049
	(.179)	(.197)	(.207)	(.228)
Government services	.016	.316*	1.082**	1.712**
	(.145)	(.152)	(.170)	(.179)
Standard of living	−.871**	−.881**	.125	.352
	(.197)	(.212)	(.249)	(.259)
Abortion	−.695**	−.814**	.266	.256
	(.155)	(.158)	(.219)	(.221)
Ideology	−.743**	−.829**	.655**	.914**
	(.155)	(.161)	(.155)	(.158)

NOTE.—Entries are difference in means test results. Negative scores indicate that the first sample listed is more liberal than its comparison group. Positive scores indicate that the first sample listed is more conservative than its comparison group. Standard errors are in parentheses.

* Difference is significant at $p < .05$.

** Difference is significant at $p < .01$.

most part, the Democratic and Republican leaders represented their followers equally. Are representatives doing a good job of representing their followers in an absolute sense, without regard to previous years? We found that leaders and followers differed significantly on at least half of the items (four of eight for the Republicans and five of eight for the Democrats). We hesitate to conclude that this, therefore, means poor representation. Given the difference in sample sizes, we want to interpret the significance tests cautiously. We also hesitate to draw this conclusion because there may be good reasons for a divergence in leader and follower opinions. It may be that we have captured a point in time when representatives are trying to lead public opinion in a new direction, or a time before persistent public opinion has succeeded in altering the representatives' positions on certain issues. (See Backstrom [1977] for an expansion of this argument.)

While we may expect more extreme positions from the leaders than the followers, we do not expect to find the followers of a given party closer to the leaders of the opposing party, which is what we found on a few issues. Collectively, the representatives are not a faithful image of the followers.

Dyadic Representation

We now turn to the second part of our study of representation. The opinions of individual legislators were compared with those of the constituents in their district. Since none of the previous research had combined both collective and dyadic representation in one research project, we were not sure what to expect. We could find that the individual representatives were doing about as well dyadically as the House members were collectively or that the representatives were doing better or worse. Weissberg reevaluated the Miller-Stokes data (1966) by looking at it collectively rather than dyadically. He concluded that "Congress as an institution is doing a better job than suggested [by this correlation and] that whatever the degree of dyadic representation, collective representation is better" (Weissberg 1978, p. 542). Since the House was not doing an outstanding job of collectively representing the public, we might expect that they were doing an even worse job dyadically.

We matched the responses we received from the House members with their constituents' opinions recorded in the CPS 1986 National Election Study.[8] We ended up with 33 districts in which we could

[8] The 1986 NES sample, unlike the 1978 NES, was not drawn using congressional district as the primary stage sampling unit (PSUs). The 1986 NES sample utilized Stan-

match responses from leaders and followers. Following Achen's advice (1978), we assumed that the behavior of the representative in a district would ideally be a function of the mean constituent preference. Achen suggests three measurements that can be used to characterize the relationship between the representative and the mean constituent opinion. These measurements are proximity, centrism, and responsiveness.

Proximity, Centrism, and Responsiveness

PROXIMITY

One way to measure dyadic representation is to calculate the difference between the views of two groups on a common scale. The proximity measure is the mean squared difference in positions between representatives and their constituents. If the views of the two groups are similar, representation is good. "This concept of representativeness is related to the norm of equality in liberal representation theory. If people have opinions and a representative's function is to reproduce them, then everyone's voice should be counted equally" (Achen 1978, p. 481). The proximity scores can range from zero to one, with zero indicating the closest that representatives can be to their constituents. Representatives cannot necessarily be blamed for a poor proximity score since the representative may be from a sharply divided district and thus unable to please everyone.

CENTRISM

The idea behind this measure is that representatives can be efficient if they choose the mean position of their constituents. This would minimize the average squared differences from a set of opinions (i.e., the definition of proximity). Centrism measures the representatives' skill at minimizing their distances from constituents:[9] "A representative who espouses the average opinion of his constituents will have a proximity score equal to the within constituent variance. Hence the effi-

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dard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) or counties as PSUs. We would therefore expect larger sampling error than if the sample had been drawn using congressional districts as PSUs. In a strict sense, however, we do have the intersection of a representative sample (the Congress sample) and a randomly drawn sample (the 1986 NES sample).

[9] Note that the formula for computing centrism scores reported in Achen (1978, p. 504) contains a typographical error. The last term in equation (B11) should read: m'^4 *not* m'_4. This error and proper correction has been confirmed through correspondence with the author.

ciency or centrality of the representative can be measured by the difference between his proximity and the constituency opinion variance" (Achen 1978, p. 487).

Like proximity scores, the range of values for centrism scores is zero to one, where zero indicates efficient representation. "This definition of representativeness is based on efficiency or centrality within a district and reflects the liberal democratic norm of fairness or neutrality toward opinions" (Achen 1978, p. 488).

RESPONSIVENESS

The last measure of representativeness is responsiveness. Responsiveness assumes that conservative districts should have representatives with conservative views, and liberal districts should have liberal representatives. "This definition of representation derives from liberal doctrines of popular sovereignty: what the people decide must influence the outcome" (Achen 1978, p. 490). Regression methods are used to estimate this measure. The regression coefficients are interpreted as the predicted response of representatives to changes in mean constituent opinion. The regression procedure is corrected for measurement error.

We used all three of these measures of representativeness, since each captures a different aspect of representation. These three measures "exhaust what the sample tells us about the relationship of representative opinion to the constituency mean" (Achen 1978, p. 496). Our results are in table 4.

Analysis

The proximity scores are listed in column 1 in table 4. These scores could range from zero (if there was no variance in the follower sample) to one (if the representatives took one extreme position and their followers took the other extreme). The actual range is from .043 to .251. The smaller the number, the greater the proximity; that is, the closer representatives are to their constituents. Our results show that the leaders best represent their districts on the issue of abortion. The leaders do a poor job on the ideological self-placement question. Compared with Achen's analysis of the 1966 Miller-Stokes data, our results suggest better representation. In our analysis the highest proximity scores observed were smaller than Achen's lowest, which ranged from .260 to .388 (Achen 1978, p. 483).

The possible range for the centrism scores is also zero to one. The lower the centrism score, the nearer the leader is to the middle of his

Table 4. Proximity, Centrism, and Responsiveness Scores for Seven Issues and Ideological Self-Placement for 33 Districts

Issues	Proximity Scores	Centrism Scores	Responsiveness Scores $\hat{a}$	$\hat{b}$
Defense spending	.094	.042	−1.12	2.95
	(.043)	(.042)	(1.66)	(3.09)
Central America	.120	.072	.189	.372
	(.052)	(.046)	(.341)	(.608)
Russia	.155	.098	−.059	1.21
	(.061)	(.060)	(.796)	(1.67)
Minority aid	.100	.052	−5.89	9.65
	(.041)	(.028)	(6.43)	(9.65)
Government services	.121	.061	−.23	1.33
	(.061)	(.045)	(.91)	(1.50)
Standard of living	.140	.080	−1.01	1.02
	(.062)	(.048)	(.83)	(1.42)
Abortion	.043	.022	.003	.98
	(.016)	(.016)	(.89)	(2.11)
Ideology	.251	.154	−2.68	3.52
	(.109)	(.094)	(3.16)	(3.07)

Sources.—1987 Survey of the U.S. House of Representatives and the CPS 1986 NES.

Note.—Standard errors are in parentheses. Smaller numbers in col. 1 indicate greater proximity. Smaller numbers in col. 2 indicate better efficiency. $N = 33$ for all of the issues in cols. 3 and 4.

or her constituency. The actual range is from .022 to .094. Again, the leaders are efficient at representing their constituencies on the issue of abortion and do not do as well with ideology. As with proximity scores, our results indicate better representation compared with that found by Achen's analysis of 1966 data. Achen found centrism scores ranging from .104 to .241, while our scores did not exceed .100.

The responsiveness scores are reported in columns 3 and 4. The $\hat{a}$ figures indicate the estimated position of the leader when the constituency position is zero. The $\hat{a}$ and $\hat{b}$ scores are bivariate regression coefficients. The $\hat{b}$ scores are the estimated change in the leaders' opinions as constituency opinion changes by one unit.

Because of our small sample size (we have results from 33 districts compared with Achen's 116) the results are not individually significant.[10] Ignoring significance for a moment, a pattern exists that is similar to the pattern found in Achen's research (1978, p. 493). The large positive slopes ($\hat{b}$'s) and negative intercepts ($\hat{a}$'s) indicate that the line best describing our data rises rapidly. Our model predicts that leaders would respond strongly to shifts in their constituents' opinions on all but the Central America item. Our results are stronger than Achen's when he used this measure on the Miller-Stokes data. The differences between the coefficients (positive slopes and negative intercepts) are larger in our analysis than in the examination of the 1966 data, indicating a stronger response to constituent opinion.

Overall, these data indicate that the representatives are near the mean constituent opinion, and that they try to minimize the distance from this mean position. The data also show that, given a shift in constituency opinion, representatives would likely adjust their opinions accordingly.

Achen wrote his article employing these measures in 1978. However, he used the 1966 data gathered by Miller and Stokes. Comparing leaders and followers by district in 1987, we see that the representatives are doing a good job of representing their constituents. We can conclude that dyadic representation is better today than was true 30 years ago.

Conclusion

Representation can be measured two ways: collectively and dyadically. Collectively, representatives in 1987 differed significantly from the public on five of seven issues. Overall, Democratic leaders better represent Democratic followers than do Republican leaders. Likewise, Republican leaders better represent Republican followers than do Democratic leaders. But how well are they really doing?

When we looked at differences among party leaders and followers within each party, we found that Democratic leaders and followers differed significantly on four of seven issues and on the ideological self-placement question. Republican leaders differed from Republican followers on three issues and on the ideological self-placement question. On some issues, the leaders of one party hold opinions closer to those held by the followers of the opposing party. Collectively, either overall or by party, leaders are not doing a great job of mirroring their followers' opinions.

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[10] However, if one assumes that each equation is independent of every other equation, then the results are jointly significant because the chances of obtaining eight positive coefficients is extremely low (.0039).

When we looked at representation dyadically, however, we found that (1) the representatives' views are fairly close to those of their constituents, (2) the representatives seem efficient at positioning themselves at the mean constituent position, and (3) the representatives seem to respond to liberal and conservative shifts in their districts.

We found that individual members of Congress do a better job representing their constituents than the House of Representatives as a whole does representing the nation. Dyadic representation is better than collective representation.[11] How can we reconcile these two conflicting results? We believe that the real answer to this question is that the results only appear to conflict; they are actually quite consistent with what one might expect given the changing nature of Congress. The story of the institutional changes in Congress that began in the 1970s has been one of decentralization of power and a weakening of collective party leadership (Dodd and Oppenheimer 1989, pp. 39–64). Members of Congress have been able to enhance their own electoral prospects, while institutional changes have not encouraged party cohesion.

One lesson from our work is that studying collective or dyadic representation requires quite different measures of representation. Collective representation analysis asks fundamentally different questions than does dyadic analysis. That is, we are measuring very different forms of representation, and there is no reason to hypothesize that those two measures will result in similar findings. Indeed, the only situation in which we might expect consistent findings across both forms of inquiry would be in the presence of responsible party government, since "party members would have a stake in their collective performance" (Fiorina 1980, p. 27).

The bottom line is that a complete examination of representation requires both collective and dyadic analyses, similarly worded survey questions, and the use of appropriate statistical techniques. The more comprehensive picture of representation that results, however, may not definitively answer the question of "good" versus "bad" representation. That answer depends on the type of representation in which one is interested. For our part, since we know that collective responsibility is difficult to achieve and is declining (Fiorina 1980), it is comforting to see that members of Congress nonetheless are representing their districts fairly well.

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[11] This is not surprising given Hurley's findings (1982, p. 133).

Appendix: Survey Questions[12]

A. Defense spending. "Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of the scale at point number 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some people would have opinions somewhere in between at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

B. Minority aid. "Some people feel the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks and other minority groups. Suppose these people are at one end of the scale at point number 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help minorities because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some people would have opinions somewhere in between at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

C. Central America. "Some people think the United States should become much more involved in the internal affairs of Central American countries. Others believe that the U.S. should become much less involved in this part of the world. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

D. Government spending. "Some people think the government should provide fewer services, even in areas such as health and education, in order to reduce spending. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

E. Standard of living. "Some people feel the government in Washington should see to it that every person has a job and a good standard of living. Others think the government should just let each person get ahead on their own. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

F. Russia. "Some people feel it is important for us to try to cooperate with Russia, while others believe we should be much tougher in our dealings with Russia. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

G. Abortion. "There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? [You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose.]"

1. By law, abortion should never be permitted.
2. The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger.

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[12] The 7-point scales used in the CPS 1986 National Election Study were used here. The sections in brackets are the portions of the CPS survey items omitted from the congressional survey.

3. The law should permit abortion for reasons *other than* rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established.
4. By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.
5. Other, specify: ______________________.

[6. Don't know.]

H. Liberal/conservative self-placement. "We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, [or haven't you thought much about this]?"

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THE POLLS—A REVIEW

EXIT POLLS IN THE 1989 VIRGINIA GUBERNATORIAL RACE: WHERE DID THEY GO WRONG?

MICHAEL W. TRAUGOTT
VINCENT PRICE

In spite of common problems associated with sampling, question wording, and interviewing procedures, well-designed exit polls—in which voters are briefly interviewed as they leave the ballot booth—generally provide accurate projections of election outcomes (see, e.g., Mitofsky and Waksberg 1989). The fact that some recent exit polls have been considerably off the mark, then, has surprised many professionals. Moreover, recent misestimates of election outcomes have helped fuel public suspicion about the inaccuracies of polls in general (Clymer 1989; Davidson 1989).

One very prominent incident occurred in the 1989 Virginia gubernatorial election. In that contest, Democrat L. Douglas Wilder narrowly defeated his Republican opponent, J. Marshall Coleman, winning by barely two-tenths of one percentage point. Yet an experienced research firm, Mason-Dixon Opinion Research (MDOR), conducted an exit poll for several television stations in Virginia and Washington, DC, and estimated an easy Wilder victory—by a 10-percentage-point margin (55–45 percent). This 5-percentage-point discrepancy was well outside the bounds of normal sampling error. In the same survey, however, MDOR accurately estimated an easy victory for the Democratic incumbent attorney general, Mary Sue Terry.

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The 1989 MDOR exit poll raised several interesting methodological questions and prompted a variety of speculations about what might have caused the error. Some suspected that sampling problems were to blame: the MDOR sample of 60 precincts might not have reflected shifting demographic patterns across the state of Virginia (Schneider, quoted in Clymer 1989). Alternatively, not weighting the results for differential turnout across the state could have been part of the problem: given that Wilder was running to become the first black governor of the state, black or white voters might have been stimulated to support Wilder or Coleman, respectively, altering the turnout substantially across precincts ("officials at NBC and Newsday" quoted in Rosenthal 1989).

The fact that the exit interviews were conducted face-to-face rather than through a self-administered questionnaire raised as well the prospect that issues of "social desirability" (DeMaio 1984) might have been involved: perhaps some whites who had failed to vote for Wilder because of his race felt some social pressure to say they did (Frankovic, quoted in Sundquist 1989). Such a pattern of response would be consistent with prior survey results obtained under a variety of racially sensitive conditions (Cotter, Cohen, and Coulter 1982; Edelman and Mitofsky 1990; Hatchett and Schuman 1975–76; Schuman and Converse 1971).[1]

In this review, we examine these alternative—though not necessarily competing—explanations for why the MDOR exit poll might have misestimated the outcome of the Wilder-Coleman contest. Although a computer-readable version of the MDOR data and a copy of their questionnaire would have been desirable for this purpose, we were unable to obtain them from MDOR (Coker 1990). Thus we worked mainly from a printed report that provided marginal results by congressional district and for the state as a whole (MDOR 1989). Of course, a direct examination of potential bias due to social desirability would require measures of respondents' race and would be greatly facilitated by a record of the interviewers' race. Not having such information for the MDOR exit poll meant we were forced to rely upon ecological relationships, interpreted in light of results from various surveys conducted prior to the election (Finkel, Guterbock, and Borg 1991; Keeter 1990). The hazards of relying upon ecological patterns to examine possible lower-level (e.g., individual) processes are formidable (see, e.g., Eulau 1986), and we make no effort to downplay them. But we can at least investigate whether various lines of speculation are consistent with district-level patterns in the MDOR data.

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[1] At a panel at the 1990 annual conference of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, researchers who analyzed a variety of preelection polls in Virginia discussed these and other potential problems (Edelman and Mitofsky 1990; Finkel, Guterbock, and Borg 1991; Keeter 1990).

Evaluating the MDOR Sample

Under the "one man, one vote" ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court, congressional districts have been redrawn in the last few cycles so they begin each decade at approximately the same size. In the early 1980s, they each consisted of about 500,000 people. For a variety of reasons related to migration and emigration patterns, districts are rarely of the same size near the end of the 10-year intercensal period. This was certainly true in Virginia: by 1989, the size and demographic composition of the congressional districts had changed considerably. In terms of registration, for example, the smallest congressional district in the state was the Second (229,402 registrants), while the Tenth was over 50 percent larger (347,101 registrants).

One speculation about the MDOR exit poll, then, was that the sample of 60 precincts did not reflect these shifting demographic patterns. No direct information is available about the design or implementation of the MDOR sample, including response rates, so this issue can only be dealt with indirectly, by comparing the exit poll estimates by congressional district with levels of registration and voting (Commonwealth of Virginia 1985, 1987, 1988, 1989).[2]

Registration and voting data are presented in table 1, along with the MDOR exit poll estimates of Wilder and Terry support, for each congressional district and for the state. First, it is noteworthy that turnout varied by congressional district. Second, there were also substantial differences by congressional district both in the actual level of electoral support for Wilder and, more to the point, in the accuracy of the MDOR exit poll projections.

In the contest for attorney general, on the other hand, the MDOR exit poll results were within sampling error of the actual results, again despite there being substantial differences in actual levels of electoral support across congressional districts. The district-level estimation errors for the two elections (the differences between the MDOR estimate and the actual vote) were uncorrelated ($r = .03$). Given that the same sample design was employed by MDOR for both elections, these data cast some doubt on the proposition that sampling factors alone could have been responsible for the errors in estimated support for Wilder.

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[2] The exact precincts sampled are not known, nor is any information available about response rates in individual precincts, congressional districts, or the overall sample. The only available indicator is the number of completed interviews per congressional district and the total number of precincts in the sample.

Table 1. Statewide and Congressional District Support for Wilder and Terry in the 1989 Gubernatorial General Election, Comparing Actual Vote and MDOR Exit Poll Estimates

	1989 Election Statistics			Wilder Support for Governor			Terry Support for Attorney General		
	Registration	Vote	Turnout (%)	MDOR Estimate (%)	Actual Vote (%)	Difference	MDOR Estimate (%)	Actual Vote (%)	Difference
Statewide	2,737,340	1,821,242	66.5	55	50.1	4.9	64	63.2	.8
Congressional district:									
1	271,012	193,547	71.4	51	51.1	−.1	64	67.8	−3.8
2	229,402	147,470	64.3	56	55.4	.6	70	70.8	−.8
3	309,817	221,280	71.4	59	48.2	10.8	61	56.3	4.7
4	255,641	185,939	72.7	49	52.2	−3.2	65	72.0	−7.0
5	245,348	174,761	71.2	50	42.1	7.9	64	63.0	−1.0
6	239,083	170,596	71.4	49	45.9	3.1	64	60.3	3.7
7	275,460	185,098	66.1	55	42.7	12.3	59	55.4	3.6
8	329,944	187,004	56.7	65	55.5	9.5	67	61.8	5.2
9	234,529	151,475	64.6	54	48.2	5.8	70	63.6	6.4
10	347,101	204,072	58.8	62	59.3	2.7	63	63.8	−.8

One way to address the issue of the representativeness of the MDOR sample, absent details on its design, is to examine the proportion of total poll interviews conducted in each congressional district in relation to that same district's proportional contribution to voter registration and election turnout statewide. By adjusting district-level sample sizes to reflect each district's contribution to registration or turnout, the probable effect of sample weighting on estimates of candidate support can be evaluated.

The number of interviews in the MDOR poll was not equally distributed across the 10 congressional districts, nor were registrants or actual voters. In the MDOR sample, the *N* per district ranged from 363 in the Second (7.7 percent of the total *N*) to 596 in the Third (12.6 percent of the total *N*). The percent of total registered voters per district ranged from 8.4 percent in the Second to 12.7 percent in the Tenth; and the proportional contributions to statewide votes cast in 1989 similarly ranged from 8.1 percent in the Second to 12.1 percent in the Third. The number of interviews per district was, in fact, moderately correlated with the number of registered voters ($r = .54$) and quite highly correlated with the number who actually turned out to vote ($r = .88$). Because the distribution of interviews across congressional districts corresponded well with the number of registrants and especially well with the distribution of voter turnout, weighting the MDOR sample to adjust for the number of registrants or the number of actual voters per district had little material effect on projected statewide proportions of the vote for either Wilder or Terry.[3]

Evaluating the Possibility of Social Desirability Bias

As noted at the outset, one line of speculation about the MDOR results focused on the potential relationship between two circumstances: first, the fact that the MDOR exit interviews were conducted face-to-face; and second, that Wilder was the first black candidate to run for the governor's office in Virginia. According to this line of reasoning, voters who failed to support Wilder because he was black—particularly Democrats who might otherwise have voted for their party's candidate—may have felt some social pressure to misreport their vote.

---

[3] Two different approaches to weighting the exit poll data were employed. One adjusted the candidates' estimated support in each district according to that district's percent contribution to statewide registration or turnout. This technique generated new district-level estimates of support but could not alter the statewide estimate. A second approach used differential contributions to statewide registration or turnout to produce weighted *N*'s in each district; the new weighted numbers of respondents supporting each candidate in each district were then aggregated to produce revised statewide projections. Using either method, differences from the actual vote were actually *increased* somewhat. Similar results were obtained for weighted estimates of Terry's support.

There seems little doubt that race was a factor in the 1989 elections in Virginia. According to the CBS News/*New York Times* (CBS/*NYT*) exit poll as reported by Oreskes (1989), about 1 in 10 (9 percent) Coleman supporters said Wilder's race had been a "major reason" for voting as they did; an equal proportion (12 percent) said it was a "minor reason." One in seven whites (15 percent) and 4 in 10 blacks (42 percent) cited Wilder's race as a reason for why they voted the way they did. The poll indicated that one-quarter (23 percent) of Coleman voters supported the Democratic candidate for lieutenant-governor, and 29 percent supported the Democratic candidate for attorney general. As a result, Wilder's margin was less than that of two other Democrats who won statewide office. J. Bradford Coker of MDOR pointed out that "only 3% of the more than 4,700 respondents admitted they voted for two white Democrats [Lieutenant Governor Beyer and Attorney General Terry] but crossed over to vote against the one Democrat who was black (Wilder)" (1989, p. 4).

The question of whether socially desirable responses to the MDOR exit poll biased its results is a complicated one to address. Ideally, the estimation of these effects (both in terms of direction and magnitude) would be based upon experimental manipulations (e.g., Lake 1989), or upon a careful secondary analysis of the exit poll data, given some information about the race of the interviewers or the correspondence between the race of the interviewer and that of the respondent (e.g., Edelman and Mitofsky 1990; Hugick and Zeglarski 1990). Unfortunately, neither of these options was possible in this instance. Therefore, in order to estimate the potential effects of social desirability bias on the MDOR exit poll, some analyses were designed using another exit poll conducted by CBS/*NYT* as well as ecological data.

In contrast to the MDOR exit poll, the CBS/*NYT* exit poll in Virginia used a standard self-administered questionnaire that the respondent completed without having to indicate out loud how he or she had voted. If face-to-face administration in fact produces bias, then, under an assumption of all other things being equal (most notably the sampling procedures and the form of the questionnaire, although neither of these conditions can be empirically substantiated), the CBS/*NYT* survey should have produced a better estimate of support for Wilder, particularly among whites.

The analysis of the CBS/*NYT* exit poll was complicated by the fact that the archived version of the data set contains only a single weight that combines an adjustment to the actual outcome of the contest with the poststratification and quality control adjustments that are used in analysis on election night. As a result, the archived data set produces a weighted outcome of the gubernatorial race that is a dead heat between Coleman and Wilder and results in a reduced margin for Terry in the attorney general's contest (CBS News/*New York Times*, n.d.).[4] The only possible analysis of the CBS/*NYT* survey that is uncontaminated by the actual election results is one using the unweighted data; the data used on election night are no longer available.

On a statewide basis, the two surveys were relatively similar in their estimated proportion of black support for Wilder, especially given the samples' sizes.[5] In the CBS/*NYT* poll, it was estimated that 92 percent of blacks voted for Wilder; in the MDOR poll the comparable figure was 94 percent; this difference is in the predicted direction but not statistically significant. There was a larger difference, however, in Wilder's estimated support among whites. The CBS/*NYT* poll estimated that 44 percent of whites voted for Wilder, while in the MDOR poll the estimate was 49 percent. In the MDOR survey, then, there was greater support for Wilder reported among both black and white respondents, as might be expected from the difference in interviewing methods; and the difference was considerably greater among whites, as might be expected by the social desirability hypothesis.

Other patterns in the MDOR results also suggest that misreporting might have been at work. At the congressional district level, the error in the MDOR estimates (the difference between the exit poll estimate and the actual vote for Wilder) is negatively correlated with average Democratic support, the proportion of blacks, and turnout ($r = -0.69$, -0.43, and -0.21, respectively). That is, the MDOR exit poll overestimated support for Wilder in districts where the white proportion of the population was greater and in those districts where turnout was lower.[6]

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[4] The software system used by CBS to generate election night estimates has changed since 1989, and the data actually used to estimate the gubernatorial election could now be reproduced only with considerable effort and cost. The archived version of all the CBS/*NYT* exit polls contains weights that are described in the ICPSR documentation as "computed taking into account the probability of selection, a non-interview adjustment, and a ratio estimate to the final vote totals." Therefore, analysts of these archived exit polls should in general be careful in interpreting the results of elections when the data have been weighted in this two-step process.

[5] In the CBS/*NYT* exit poll, there were 1,153 respondents in all, 78.6 percent of whom were white and 18.9 percent of whom were black. There were 23 (2.0 percent) respondents who identified themselves as of another race, and 6 (.5 percent) who did not answer this question. As for partisanship, 33.9 percent identified themselves as Republican, 29.7 percent as Democrats, and 26.6 percent as independents. However, 103 respondents (9.8 percent) did not answer this question.

[6] Beyond these bivariate relationships, the MDOR errors were further analyzed through a multivariate logistical regression. Using the proportion of votes overestimated for Wilder as the dependent variable, the regression estimated significant negative coefficients for the percent of traditional Democratic vote in each district, the proportion of blacks, and the percent turnout.

Conclusions

The results of these analyses suggest that the estimates from the 1989 Virginia exit poll conducted by Mason-Dixon Opinion Research more likely stemmed from the use of face-to-face interviews conducted in person than from a problematic sample of precincts by congressional district. The ecological patterns uncovered here are at least consistent with the notion that the MDOR errors resulted from the misreporting of votes by whites. The exit poll errors were greater in those congressional districts where the proportion of whites was higher and where turnout was lower.

This analysis illustrates the risks inherent in conducting surveys on politically or culturally sensitive topics. It seems clear to many respondents in our racially sensitized electorate that the "socially desirable" response when asked about a vote for a white and a black candidate facing each other is to indicate support for the black. In any survey setting, careful attention must be paid to details of sampling, weighting, and mode of administration. Although it is possible that asking sensitive questions anonymously will reduce bias, exit polls conducted at the end of racially charged political campaigns require careful attention to other potential sources of bias as well. Care in fielding surveys must be matched by the preservation and dissemination of information that will permit analysis of their effects, if any.

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A5 16-1A

Public Opinion Quarterly

Published for the American
Association for Public Opinion
Research by the University of
Chicago Press

JAMES A. DAVIS	Changeable Weather in a Cooling Climate
PHILIP E. CONVERSE	Comment
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ERIC A. GREENLEAF	Measuring Extreme Response Style
RESEARCH NOTES	
NANCY A. MATHIOWETZ	Errors in Reports of Occupation
LOUIS G. POL	A Method to Increase Response
THE POLLS	Trends: Religion *by Tom W. Smith*
BOOK REVIEWS	Reviews *by Nathaniel Beck, John G. Geer, Jacqueline Scott, and Gale D. Metzger*

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

Fall 1992

PUBLIC OPINION QUARTERLY

VOLUME 56 / FALL 1992 / NUMBER 3

Articles

Changeable Weather in a Cooling Climate Atop the Liberal Plateau: Conversion and Replacement in Forty-two General Social Survey Items, 1972–1989 261
JAMES A. DAVIS

Comment on Davis's "Changeable Weather in a Cooling Climate Atop the Liberal Plateau" 307
PHILIP E. CONVERSE

Comment on Davis: Yes, but . . . Public Opinion Is a *Top-Down* Process 311
CLIFF ZUKIN

Consequences of Participating in a Longitudinal Study of Marriage 315
JOSEPH VEROFF, SHIRLEY HATCHETT, and ELIZABETH DOUVAN

Measuring Extreme Response Style 328
ERIC A. GREENLEAF

Research Notes

Errors in Reports of Occupation 352
NANCY A. MATHIOWETZ

A Method to Increase Response When External Interference and Time Constraints Reduce Interview Quality 356
LOUIS G. POL

The Polls

Trends: Religious Beliefs and Behaviors and the Televangelist Scandals of 1987–1988 360
TOM W. SMITH

Book Reviews

James A. Stimson, *Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles and Swings* 381
NATHANIEL BECK

Martin P. Wattenberg, *The Rise of Candidate-centered Politics* 383
JOHN G. GEER

Martin King Whyte, *Dating, Mating and Marriage* 385
JACQUELINE SCOTT

James G. Webster and Lawrence W. Lichty, *Ratings Analysis: Theory and Practice* 386
GALE D. METZGER

AAPOR Proceedings

Conference Report 388

AAPOR Award 390

Presidential Address: *A Response to the Nonresponse Problem* 391
NORMAN M. BRADBURN

Conference Program 398

Annual Membership Meeting 414

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CHANGEABLE WEATHER IN A COOLING CLIMATE ATOP THE LIBERAL PLATEAU

CONVERSION AND REPLACEMENT IN FORTY-TWO GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY ITEMS, 1972–1989

JAMES A. DAVIS

Abstract This article tracks trends (early 1970s to late 1980s) in U.S. opinion for 42 General Social Survey items with liberal/conservative overtones. The broad question is whether the great "liberal" shift since World War II has ended; the narrow issue is the relative importance of cohort succession and intracohort shifts. Despite common impressions, the overall trend is more liberal than conservative, but it conceals opposing "weather" and "climate" processes. Within cohorts ("weather") I find a conservative trend between the early and late 1970s and a liberal "rebound" in the 1980s. Between cohorts virtually all items show small but cumulative liberalizing produced by cohort succession. These cohort effects are declining in magnitude because the association between year of birth and liberalism is nonlinear. I find a curvilinearity such that Americans born after World War II are not consistently more liberal than their predecessors. This shift is not explained by the lesser schooling of youngest adults or by ceiling effects. Consequently, I predict lessening of the liberalizing "climate" produced by cohort succession. All these propositions are qualified, depending on the topic, and the analysis takes heed of the notorious age/period/cohort identification problem.

This article is about liberal and conservative trends in American attitudes during the 1970s and 1980s. It uses 42 items from the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) General Social Survey (GSS) to (1) assess overall liberal/conservative direction, that is, trends in the

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marginals; (2) decompose changes into portions due to intracohort shifts (conversion) and cohort succession (replacement); (3) scrutinize the conversion data to see whether rates and directions are consistent throughout the period; and (4) scrutinize the replacement data to see whether cohort succession operates consistently throughout the period. The article builds from Smith's (1990) assessment of long-term trends in American attitudes and Davis's (1980) "weather versus climate" metaphor. It is impossible to review the literature on such a broad topic. The 1990 edition of the GSS *Annotated Bibliography* (Smith and Arnold 1990) alone contains 179 studies on change in the variables treated here. The most similar previous study (Chafetz and Ebaugh 1983) treats the first half of the period covered here. Their results are consistent with mine, although they do not treat my main theme: intra- and intercohort processes. See also Kiecolt (1988).

Data

All the data come from NORC's General Social Survey, an almost annual, omnibus, item replication, personal interview, household study of U.S. English speakers 18 and older, living in households (Davis and Smith 1989). Respondents 18 and 19 years of age are excluded here to make the age categories tidy.

Using these and similar survey data Smith assessed trends from the late 1930s to 1987 for 455 survey items. He concludes (1990, pp. 502–3), "Overall the post World War II period has been a time of liberal advance . . . [but] liberal movement slowed appreciably in the mid-1970s . . . liberal momentum and advance ended on the liberal plateau of the mid-1970s, but no general conservative advance occurred."

I chose 42 GSS items from Smith's collection, selecting items that (1) are widely used, (2) cover a range of themes, and (3) appeared throughout the 1970s and 1980s. I dichotomized each variable so all 42 would have similar distributions and assigned a liberal (+) and conservative (−) pole to the responses. (See App. A for details.) I had no formal definition of liberal/conservative but assumed that liberalism is associated with (1) tolerance or permissiveness, (2) support for the welfare and redistributive state, (3) sexual and racial equality, and (4) secularism. These scorings turned out to match Smith's more rigorous decisions (1990, pp. 480–82) in all cases, illustrating his conclusion that the distinction is theoretically fuzzy but practically reliable. I was not aiming to test any specific political hypothesis. I use the distinction to provide a conceptual framework to summarize dozens and dozens of isolated statistics. Since Appendix B contains

Table 1. Mean Years and Maximum *N*'s for Each Period

	Period 1: 1972 1973 1974	Period 2: 1977 1978 No GSS 1980	Period 3: 1982 1983 1984	Period 4: 1987 1988 1989
Mean	1973	1978.3	1983	1988
Maximum *N*	4,601	4,530	4,578	4,484

the statistical results for each item, readers who reject my scoring are free to reconsider the analysis.

I grouped the items into six topical clusters. The grouping is mostly common sense, but it turned out to catch some interesting variations. The topics and items (see App. A for mnemonics) are as follows:

CRIME (5): CAPPUN, COURTS, GRASS, NATCRIME, NATDRUG.
FREE SPEECH (8): LIBATH, LIBCOM, LIBHOMO, PORNLAW, SPKATH, SPKCOM, SPKHOMO, SPKRAC.
POLITICS (9): COMMUN, NATARMS, NATCITY, NATEDUC, NATENVIR, NATFARE, NATHEAL, PARTYID, POLVIEWS.
RACE (5): BUSING, NATRACE, RACMAR, RACOPEN, RACSEG.
RELIGION (6): ATTEND, FUND, LETDIE1, POSTLIFE, RELITEN, SUICIDE1.
SEX/GENDER (9): ABHLTH, ABSINGLE, CHLDIDEL, FEHOME, FEPRES, FEWORK, HOMOSEX, PREMARSX, XMOVIE.

I grouped the GSS years into four periods for simplicity, to maintain case bases, and because before 1988 the GSS used a rotation scheme such that "permanent" items appeared in only 2 out of 3 consecutive years. Table 1 summarizes the periods.

It would be impossible to list the important events of each period and the results will cast doubt on the notion that these items are affected by the sporadic episodes that generate press coverage. Nevertheless, table 2 gives some historical context and points out some nonattitudinal trends. Politically, it was a Republican presidential era, interrupted only by the Carter administration in period 2. In terms of SES there was a substantial upgrading in educational attainment and a discernible upgrading in occupational prestige while both financial items were U-

Table 2. Characteristics of the Periods

Characteristic	Period 1		Period 2		Period 3		Period 4
Incumbent president	Nixon/Ford		Carter		Reagan		Reagan/Bush
Socioeconomic status:							
Education = 12+ years (EDUC)	63	*	68	*	73	*	77
Occupational prestige, Hodge-Segal-Rossi scale (PRESTIGE):							
47–82 (high)	30	n	31	n	31	*	36
33–46	36	n	36	n	36	n	36
12–32 (low)	35	n	33	n	32	*	28
Changes in financial situation (FINALTER):							
Better	40	n	40	n	39	n	41
Same	42	*	38	*	35	*	41
Worse	19	*	22	*	26	*	18
Better-worse	+21		+18		+13		+22

Relative income self-rating (FINRELA):							
Above average	18	n	20	n	19	n	21
Average	57	*	52	n	50	n	51
Below average	24	*	28	?	30	?	28
Family:							
Marital status (MARITAL):							
Single	11	*	14	*	16	?	18
Married	73	n	63	*	59	*	55
Widowed/separated/divorced	16	*	22	*	25	?	27
Married women in labor force	39	*	47	*	55	*	62
Well-being (self-ratings):							
Happiness (HAPPY):							
Very happy	35	n	34	n	33	n	33
Pretty happy	51	*	54	n	54	*	57
Not too happy	14	*	11	n	13	*	10
Health "excellent" (HEALTH)	68	n	68	n	68	n	68

NOTE.—Data are expressed as percentages. Mnemonics are given in parentheses. Symbols between columns are as follows: * indicates that adjacent percentages are statistically significant; ? indicates that adjacent percentages are borderline; and n indicates that adjacent percentages are not significant. (See n. 1 for details.)

shaped, with declines from periods 1 to 2 to 3 followed by a recovery in period 4 (the late 1980s).[1] Family structures display the well-known trends away from marriage and toward greater labor force participation by wives. Self-ratings of health were highly stable, but self-reported unhappiness decreased.

Raw Trends

Was there a conservative trend atop the liberal plateau? The simplest answer is given by comparing the marginals for periods 1 and 4. The data appear in the right-hand columns of Appendix A where we see the percentage liberal for the early seventies and late eighties and the classic measure of association for a fourfold table, Yule's Q. I used Q rather than the difference in percentages, D, because it dovetails better with the later "loglinear" analyses. The reader can calculate D's from Appendix A. Table 3 summarizes.

Taking these numbers at face value, the trend in the seventies and eighties was in a liberal direction, not a conservative one: Positive Q's outnumber negative ones 24 to 14, the mean Q is +.071, the median is +.045, and nine of the 10 items with magnitudes of .20 or more are liberal. Popular impressions to the contrary, American attitudes were distinctly more liberal in the late 1980s than in the early 1970s. Noting that the items with the biggest Q's are mostly from the race and gender/sex categories, let us look at a breakdown by content, as shown in table 4.

Table 4 suggests the net trends were distinctly positive for race,[2] free speech, and sex/gender, distinctly negative for crime, and mixed for religion and politics. Additional crime items might pull the overall

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[1] The GSS is a multistage (clustered) area probability sample. Consequently, each item has a design effect (DEFF) estimating its precision vis-à-vis a simple random sample (SRS). Design effects, of course, vary item by item, but study of the GSS suggests that the standard rule of thumb, DEFF = 1.5, is a good approximation. (Actually, age has a relatively small design effect since households in all neighborhoods tend to have a range of ages, but this is not true for the other items.) In other words, short of working out complex calculations for each variable, a conservative strategy would be to treat GSS N's as "worth" $.67N$. Thus, for chi-square tests, I worked out CN (Hoelter 1983), the sample size required to make the difference just exactly significant at the .05 level. When CN/N is less than .67, the effect would still be significant if the design effect were 1.5 or less. Following this convention, throughout this article I have treated a difference as (1) insignificant if $p > .049$ SRS, (2) significant if $p < .05$ and $CN/N < .67$, and (3) borderline in all other cases. The reader should bear in mind the sample sizes here are so large that any difference that appears nontrivial (and some that appear trivial) will be statistically reliable. The conclusions hinge on consistency of results across the 42 items, not statistical significance per se.

[2] Analysts of race attitudes distinguish between items about abstract principles and items about "implementation." Three of the five race items treat implementation (BUSING, NATRACE, and RACOPEN). All three show liberal trends.

Table 3. Distribution (Stem and Leaf) for P1/P4 *Q*'s in Appendix A

1st Digit	2d Digit
+.4	1
+.3	000179
+.2	126
+.1	0122478
+.0	3444479
.0	0
−.0	4489
−.1	000011199
−.2	4

NOTE.—Mean = +.071; median = +.045; SD = .176. Number: + = 24, 0 = 1, − = 14, for a total of 39 (3 na [no period 1 data]). Items with *Q* magnitudes >.20: BUSING, +.41; RACSEG, +.39; RACOPEN, +.37; FEWORK, +.31; FEHOME, +.30; FEPRES, +.30; RACMAR, +.26; COURTS, −.24; CHLDIDEL, +.22; SPKHOMO, +.21.

Table 4. Raw Changes, Early Seventies to Late Eighties by Topic

Topic	*N*	−	+	Mean *Q*
Race	5	0	5	+.297
Free speech	7	0	7	+.120
Sex/gender	9	3	6	+.115
Politics	9	5	4	+.001
Religion	4	2	2	−.008
Crime	5	5	0	−.130
Total	39	15	24	+.063[a]

[a] Mean of the six *Q*'s.

mean down, but, if each topic had the same number of items, the mean *Q* would still be +.063 in comparison with the +.077 in table 3.

These liberal shifts during the seventies and eighties do not challenge Smith's plateau metaphor. Using the rule of thumb that a *Q* is twice as big as a percentage difference for the same table and the "adjusted" mean *Q* of +.063 from table 4, on the average these items moved about 3 percentage points over 15 years or roughly two points per decade. There appears to be an incline atop the plateau but it is gentle.

Intracohort Shifts

METHODS

The weather/climate metaphor implies a separation of these raw changes into (1) intracohort changes and (2) changes due to the succession of birth cohorts. Before grappling with the notorious methodological issues, let me explain my procedures.

First, I divided age into 13 5-year intervals (20–24, 25–29, . . . , 75–79, 80+) and cross-tabulated them against the dependent variables within each of the four periods. Table 5 illustrates with the granddaddy of them all, SPKCOM, Samuel Stouffer's (1954) item on free speech for communists.

Each age group moved up one category every 5 years. Thus, the 20–24-year-olds in period 1 appear as 25–29-year-olds in period 2 and 30–34-year-olds in period 4. Consequently, if we stagger the rows as in table 5, we can follow birth cohorts over time. They are not the same respondents, but they are samplings from the same populations. For example, consider the "class of '51," those who were age 20–24 in 1972–74 (1973 − 22 = 1951). In the early seventies 72 percent chose the liberal (free speech) answer. Five years later they had become ages 25–29, and 68 percent gave the liberal answer, a four-point drop.[3] Similar comparisons showed a five-point liberal shift in the early eighties and no change in the late eighties. This cohort became less liberal in the late seventies, reversed course when it entered the early eighties, and showed no change during the eighties. This is a typical pattern. Whether these inferences are statistically reliable remains to be seen. To make these crucial comparisons clear, table 6 displays the intracohort shifts in SPKCOM for all cohorts, using Yule's *Q*.

A scan of table 5 tells the story: in most cohorts the shifts are negative for periods 1 and 2, mixed for periods 2 and 3, and positive for periods 3 and 4. Within cohorts, Americans became less tolerant (less liberal) on this free speech item during the late seventies, changed little as they entered the eighties, and then became a bit more tolerant in the late eighties.

If the shifts are similar in each cohort (no period/cohort/attitude

---

[3] These are net changes. We have no idea how many shifted which way, but the figures tell us the conservative shifts outnumbered liberal shifts in the seventies, the opposite occurred between the late seventies and early eighties, and during the eighties equal proportions shifted each way.

Table 5. Percentage Choosing "Allow" on Free Speech for Communists (SPKCOM)

Cohort Members' Ages during P1	Cohort[a]	Period				N's				Row Differential[b]	
		1	2	3	4	P1	P2	P3	P4	*d*	Cumulative
	1966				67%				315		0
	1961			62%	71%			333	375	+4.2	+4.2
	1956		66%	63%	68%		326	399	402	−1.3	+2.9
20–24	1951	72%	68%	73%	73%	521	339	336	405	+5.4	+8.3
25–29	1946	74%	71%	73%	70%	545	346	300	323	+.9	+9.2
30–34	1941	61%	59%	63%	66%	443	276	236	280	−10.3	−1.1
35–39	1936	65%	55%	59%	55%	414	238	190	213	−2.6	−3.7
40–44	1931	64%	59%	53%	60%	362	226	168	183	+.4	−3.3
45–49	1926	54%	56%	49%	46%	417	224	221	219	−8.1	−11.4
50–54	1921	54%	49%	49%	51%	393	255	192	222	−.2	−11.6
55–59	1916	47%	42%	42%	43%	371	191	184	176	−7.6	−19.2
60–64	1911	36%	34%	43%	36%	307	198	141	156	−7.1	−26.3
65–69	1906	38%	36%	29%	31%	279	142	99	118	−1.9	−28.2
70–74	1901	29%	31%	31%		226	85	101		−5.9	−34.1
75–79	1896	30%	24%			127	71			−1.8	−35.9
80+		27%				79					
Total		56%	55%	58%	61%	4,484	2,917	2,900	3,287		

[a] Birth year for median in age group in median year of period.

[b] Variance weighted difference between adjacent rows ("partial *d*").

Table 6. Intracohort Changes in Table 5 (Yule's *Q*)

Cohort	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4
1961			+.211
1956		−.065	+.114
1951	−.110	+.119	+.005
1946	−.095	+.045	−.060
1941	−.050	+.095	+.065
1936	−.202	+.080	−.080
1931	−.105	−.119	+.134
1926	+.050	−.149	−.065
1921	−.095	.000	+.080
1916	−.095	.000	+.025
1911	−.060	+.183	−.139
1906	−.050	−.149	+.050
1901	+.035	.000	
1896	−.149		
Average	−.077	+.003	+.028

interaction) one can summarize each period with a single number. The averages in table 6 (−.077, +.003, +.028) are a simple way, but iterative proportional fitting gives an appropriate test of the no-interaction null hypothesis plus a more sophisticated measure of intracohort shift.[4]

I made three separate runs, one for period 2 versus 1, one for period 3 versus 2, and one for period 4 versus 3. "Nonspanning cohorts"—persons 20–24 at time 2 and persons 80 and older at time 1 were excluded.[5] Table 7 gives the results for SPKCOM.

None of the three interactions is statistically reliable even with simple random sample (SRS) calculations. Substantively, this means each cohort changed at about the same rate (more on this later). Technically, it justifies a simple way to estimate the three rates: run off no-interaction models and read the rate in the fitted data. Table 8 illustrates.

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[4] All "log linear" calculations were done with the personal computer program MICLOG. MICLOG reports its results as log odds. To get *Q*'s I used a pocket calculator to find antilogs (odds) and transformed then to *Q*'s with the standard formula *Q* = (odds − 1)/(odds + 1).

[5] Of course, not all 80-year-olds die within 5 years. However, mortality tables suggest that about 30 percent do, and their numbers are so small to begin with (2–3 percent of the cases in each period) that little is lost by this oversimplification. On the technical side, one might use a fancier program that allowed zero cells for the nonspanners. The substantive conclusions would come out the same, but one would not get separate tests for each pair of periods.

Table 7. Interactions in Table 5: Fit for Model (Cohort, Period)(Cohort, SPKCOM)(Period, SPKCOM)

	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4
χ^2	6.1	12.3	13.1
df	11	11	11
p	.864	.342	.284
N	6,996	5,413	5,871
CN	22,565	8,659	8,814
CN/N	3.2	1.6	1.5
BIC	−91.3	−82.3	−82.4
Decision[a]	n	n	n

[a] See n. 1 for explanation; n indicates insignificance.

In the fitted data the net shifts (in odds) will be identical in each cohort—by definition. One can simply read off the result for any convenient cohort; the others will be identical. For SPKCOM we get, for period 2 versus period 1, −.080; for period 3 versus period 2, +.010; and for period 4 versus period 3, +.040.

Table 8 also reports the shifts in percentage form. We see, as the textbooks tell us, identical odds produce slightly different *d*'s as the marginals move toward or away from 50/50, but we also see, practically speaking, the *D*'s and *Q*'s tell the same story as the unweighted averages in table 6: a conservative shift in the late seventies, no change in the early eighties, and a small liberal shift in the late eighties.

To test for significance one may compare goodness of fit for models with and without the period effect: that is, (period, cohort)(cohort, dependent) versus (period, cohort)(cohort, dependent)(period, dependent). Table 9 gives the results for SPKCOM.

The shift from the early seventies to the late seventies is statistically reliable. It is significant assuming simple random sampling and also assuming an effective *N* of .67*N* (see n. 1). The shifts in the eighties, however, are not statistically significant even assuming SRS. Thus, within cohorts there was a reliable "conservative" trend regarding free speech for communists from the early seventies to the late seventies but no reliable changes after that.

So far we have seen how the classic cohort table layout and simple log linear modeling allow us to describe intracohort shifts and assess their reliability. The procedures are explained in detail because they are carried out for each of the 42 items and constitute the main findings.

Table 8. Fitted Data for Models in Table 6

Cohort	Percentage Liberal						Percentage Difference		
	P1	P2	P2	P3	P3	P4	P2–P1	P3–P2	P4–P3
1961					66.1	67.7			+1.6
1956			64.1	64.5	64.7	66.4		+.4	+1.7
1951	71.8	68.4	69.9	70.3	71.9	73.4	−3.4	+.4	+1.5
1946	74.3	71.1	71.5	71.9	70.6	72.2	−3.2	+.4	+1.6
1941	61.7	57.8	60.6	61.0	63.8	65.6	−3.9	+.4	+1.8
1936	62.6	58.7	56.6	57.0	55.8	57.7	−3.9	+.4	+1.9
1931	63.4	59.5	56.2	56.6	55.4	57.3	−3.9	+.4	+1.9
1926	56.0	52.0	52.4	52.8	46.3	48.2	−4.0	+.4	+1.9
1921	53.9	49.8	49.2	49.7	49.2	51.1	−4.1	+.5	+1.9
1916	46.4	42.4	41.7	42.1	41.6	43.4	−4.0	+.4	+1.8
1911	36.9	33.2	37.3	37.7	38.1	39.9	−3.7	+.4	+1.8
1906	38.9	35.0	33.0	33.4	29.6	31.1	−3.9	+.4	+1.5
1901	30.5	27.2	30.4	30.8			−3.3	+.4	
1896	28.9	25.7					−3.2		
Q							−.080	+.010	+.040

Table 9. Significance of Intracohort Shifts for SPKCOM

	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4
Q	−.080	+.010	+.040
N	6,996	5,413	5,871
χ^2	9.9	.1	1.9
df	1	1	1
p	.002	.760	.171
CN	2,714	207,913	11,868
CN/N	.39	38.4	2.0
BIC	+1.05	−8.50	−6.78
Decision[a]	*	n	n

[a] See n. 1 for explanation. An asterisk indicates significance; n indicates insignificance.

Before moving on to the results for the other 41 items, it is necessary to discuss two methodological issues. The first problem is tabular control. Although tables such as table 5 are the standard method for "cohort" studies, Firebaugh (1989) argues that the broad categories of tabular analysis do not provide sufficient control to partial out cohort differences. Thus, within each of the age categories (e.g., 30–34) there is still a 5-year spread in birth year. Firebaugh's general point is well-taken, and analysts should confront the issue more often than they do. However, I think one can marshal considerable support for table 5. First, 13 categories are a lot of categories and when we get to our own regression analyses we will see that 5 years does not produce enormous differences in the dependent variables. Second, when one is contrasting variables (e.g., period vs. cohort here) it is probably more important that they have similar degrees of control than that the control be perfect. Here both cohort and period are chopped into identical 5-year intervals. Third, an informal experiment with even looser groupings of age suggests that "refinement" (Davis 1971, p. 83) does not make much difference.[6] Fourth, the association between cohort and period is quite small in tables excluding the "nonspanning" cohorts. Technically, this means (in path analysis terms) the product period/cohort and cohort/dependent is quite small, and there is not much of an effect to control for. Substantively, this means the major component of cohort change is the advent of the newcomer 20–24-year-olds and the departure of the 80+-year-olds, not the winnowing among those 20–79 in period 1. All in all, the coarse category argument seems more impressive a priori than in this particular application.

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[6] I chose six items with the largest cohort effects (explained later), GRASS, NATENVIR, PORNLAW, PREMARSX, RACMAR, and XMOVIE. First, I divided the 13 age categories into equal halves and calculated partial d's using dichotomous controls. Then I divided each half in half and calculated partial d's using four control categories. Finally, I did the same thing with eight categories. Since later cohorts are more liberal, cohort tends to make time associations more positive. When cohort is controlled, the partial associations between period and the dependent variable should be less positive.

Firebaugh, in turn, is criticized by Rodgers (1990), who waves the bloody shirt of the age/period/cohort identification problem (Glenn 1976). Rodgers's point is also well-taken. While the columns in table 5 are labeled "Period," people in each row category age by exactly 5 years in each period; while the rows are labeled "Cohort," each row category is 5 years younger or older than the next. Thus age is inextricably confounded with period and with cohort. I will grant that. Nevertheless there is no question that within a row we are talking about the same people (sampling variation aside) and within each column we are talking about distinct populations. It follows that the setup does distinguish change by "conversion" (persons in a given row altering their opinions) from change by replacement (altered composition in terms of the column variable). That is the central sociological question in this article: How much change is coming from alteration of opinions from period to period, and how much is coming from the substitution of new adults for old? Whether the conversion is due to aging or due to period or whether the substitution is of younger people to people born later in the century—neither can be determined by the design alone. I follow Rodgers and Glenn in believing no statistical hocus-pocus can resolve the problem. Instead, we need measured intervening variables. One will turn up later.

FINDINGS

Having persuaded myself that the methodological problems are not fatal, I proceeded to carry out the same calculations on the other 41 dependent items. First, I tested period × cohort × dependent interactions, à la table 7. Of 123 tests (42 items × 3 period pairs − 3 na [not available]), 105 were insignificant ($p > .049$), 17 were borderline ($p <$

If Firebaugh's (1989) criticism is correct, increasingly finer controls should make partials less positive (more negative). This did happen. For example, with PORNLAW for periods 3–4, the partial d with a dichotomy control was −2.6, with four control categories the partial was −2.8 (0.2 points more negative), and with eight control categories the d was −3.0, another 0.2-point change. Averaged over six items and three times, however, moving from two to four categories produced a mean decrease of 0.2 (as in PORNLAW), while moving from four to eight produced a mean decrease of just 0.002.

.049, $CN/N > .667$), and one was statistically reliable. Considering the generous sample sizes (typically five to seven thousand cases) the data are strikingly free of interactions. Indeed, there are hardly any hints of interactions. For example, in the 18 reliable or borderline cases, I compared the change for the youngest cohort with the pooled rate: in 11 cases the youngest changed faster, in three cases they changed in the same direction but with a smaller coefficient, and in four cases they moved in the opposite direction.[7] This negative finding is so contradictory to sociological orthodoxy (that younger people change faster), it is reassuring to know similar conclusions were reached in (1) Chafetz and Ebaugh's (1983) review of GSS trends, (2) Shapiro and Page's (1984) monumental study of political attitudes, and (3) long-term studies of the Dutch (Social and Cultural Planning Office of the Netherlands 1986).

On the methodological side, these findings justify the decision to estimate intracohort shifts by modeling and they provide a scrap of negative evidence on the age/cohort matter. Since ages form diagonal ridges through tables such as table 5, strong age effects might be expected to produce interactions. For obviously age-patterned variables such as marital status one does find significant cohort/period/dependent variable interactions (for marital status [Never married/Married/Exmarried], all three interactions are highly significant [$p = .001$]) but not for our attitudes.

On to the actual intracohort shifts. The detailed results, *Q*'s and significance test decisions, appear in row 2 for each item in Appendix B. Table 10 summarizes them: Table 10 hardly suggests cataclysmic social change. Of the 123 coefficients, less than half (44 percent) are statistically reliable even though the typical *N*'s are three to six thousand cases. Across 5-year intervals these GSS items are as likely to show insignificant net change within cohorts as to generate a reliable difference.

Do the intracohort shifts, albeit modest, show a tilt to the Right? Starting with the simple grand totals in table 10, I would call it a draw. Negative (conservative) changes do outnumber liberal ones but only 64 to 54, and, among the statistically reliable, it is 30 to 24—no conservative landslide. There is no evidence of a pervasive shift to the Right (or Left) during the 1970s and 1980s.

But if we look at the periods separately, a pattern emerges, as shown

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[7] To pile it on, the 18 "possibles" included 15 items, of which 12 reached borderline significance in only one of the three period adjacencies, two in two periods, and one in all three. But the time that showed suggestions of interactions more than once did not show consistent patterns of their residuals across periods. In sum, of the 42 items, not one showed persistent, much less significant, patterns of residuals from the no-interaction model.

Table 10. Distribution of Intracohort Net Shift *Q*'s in Appendix B

	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Total
Sign:				
Positive	9	19	26	54
Zero	2	1	2	5
Negative	28	22	14	64
Total	39	42	42	123
Significance:				
Yes (positive)	10%	29%	19%	20%
Other	49%	50%	69%	56%
Yes (negative)	41%	21%	12%	24%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
Means:[a]				
All items	−.086	+.009	+.030	−.054
By topic:				
Race	−.010	+.064	+.107	+.157
Gender/sex	−.048	+.039	−.023	−.034
Free speech	−.066	−.016	+.026	−.058
Religion[b]	−.026	−.040	−.008	−.074
Politics	−.236	+.034	+.115	−.095
Crime	−.040	−.091	−.069	−.202

[a] Means in the Total column are cumulative means.

[b] SUICIDE1 and LETDIE1 were excluded because data were not available for period 1.

in figure 1. Taking a *Q* of .08 or stronger as nontrivial, figure 1 suggests a sort of ratchet effect, a rightward lurch in the late 1970s with the average item shifting −.08, and then little net movement in the 1980s.[8]

A more nuanced reading comes from looking at topics and items. Figure 2 displays mean intracohort shifts by period and topics. Reading

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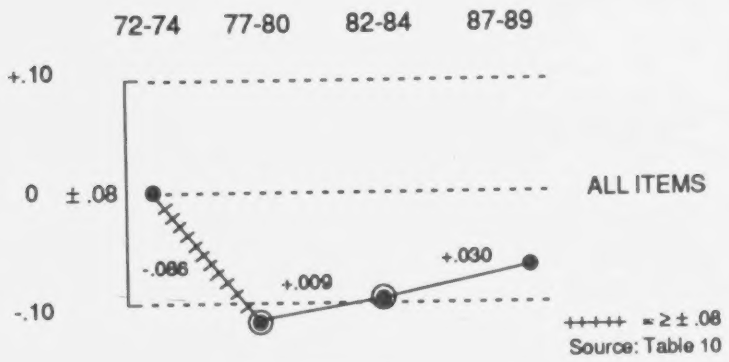
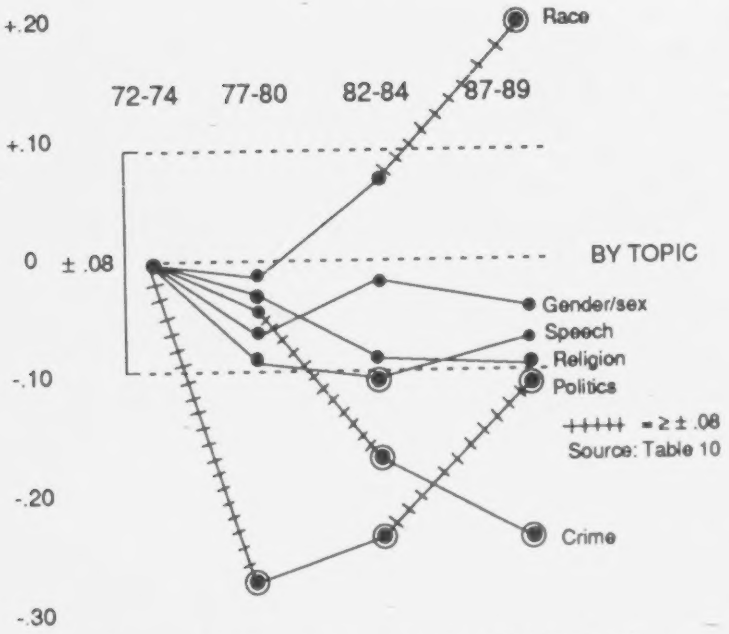
[8] A period 1 to period 4 intracohort change table would lose a lot of cases because of nonspanning cohorts. To get around this I found the cumulative coefficient by summing across the three shift *Q*'s. My statistical program reported them as log odds. To cumulate, I summed the three log odds, found the antilog, and transformed the antilog to *Q*. Inspection of the original coefficients showed a *Q* magnitude of .08 to be a very good proxy for the .05 level of significance. It is not a very demanding criterion as it corresponds roughly to a percentage difference of four and thus somewhat less than one point per year.



Source: Table 10

Figure 1. Mean intracohort shifts (*Q*)



Source: Table 10

Figure 2. Mean intracohort shifts by topic

figure 2 by period, we find that, in the late 1970s, the POLITICAL items showed a striking conservative shift (averaging 24 *Q* points), while the other groups showed slight tendencies in the same direction. In the early eighties, the CRIME items showed a definite conservative shift, while the other topics had a mixed pattern. In the late eighties, RACE and POLITICS show substantial liberal trends while the other topics had mixed results.

Table 11 helps us read the same results by topic. The crime items are the only group to fit the popular impression of a thoroughgoing

Table 11. Period-to-Period and Cumulative Intracohort Shifts of .08 or Stronger by Item and Topic

Topic and Item	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Cumulative
Race:				
BUSING			+.23	+.29
RACSEG		+.16		+.27
RACOPEN		+.11	+.09	+.23
RACMAR	+.10	−.11	+.08	
NATRACE	−.23	+.10		
Gender:				
CHLDIDEL	+.10			+.15
FEWORK		+.10		+.14
FEPRES		+.08		+.12
FEHOME		+.18		+.11
Free speech:				
PORNLAW	−.10			−.24
LIBCOM				−.09
SPKRAC	NA			NA
LIBHOMO				
SPKHOMO				
LIBATH	−.08			
SPKCOM	−.08			
SPKATH	−.08			
Politics:				
NATEDUC		+.12	+.12	+.22

PREMARSX				
ABSINGLE				−.12
ABHLTH			−.10	−.19
HOMOSEX			−.10	−.22
XMOVIE	−.38	+.11		−.24
Religion:				
SUICIDE1	NA	+.12		NA
LETDIE[1]	NA			NA
ATTEND				
FUND				
POSTLIFE				
RELITEN		−.14		−.11

NATHEAL	−.16		+.22	+.09
NATENVIR	−.31		+.28	
NATFARE	−.35	+.26		−.08
NATARMS	−.57	+.22	+.30	−.11
PARTYID			−.10	−.19
COMMUN	−.23	−.14	+.15	−.22
POLVIEWS	−.19	−.11		−.26
NATCITY	−.24			−.26
Crime:				
NATCRIME				−.09
NATDRUG	+.14		−.23	−.15
CAPPUN	−.08	−.13		−.19
GRASS	+.18	−.20	−.20	−.22
COURTS	−.43			−.37

Note.—NA indicates that data were not in the GSS in period 1.

conservative shift. Aside from a hint of softness on drugs in the late seventies, all five tended in the conservative (punitive) direction, especially between the late seventies and early eighties. By the late eighties, all five showed cumulative negative intracohort shifts of .08 or more.

The political reaction of the late seventies was thoroughly conservative and large by the standards of these data. From the early seventies to the late seventies seven of the nine items showed negative shifts of .08 or larger and five exceeded 20 *Q* points. The themes are clear: anti–welfare state, prodefense. The topic of politics being inherently topical, this pendulum reversed in the eighties, with eight of 11 changes being positive. As is characteristic of pendulums, the backswing was less strong, so the cumulative differences are heavily negative. In other words, shortly before the Americans elected Ronald Reagan, their issue preferences moved sharply rightward, but they tended to drift left during the eighties. Nevertheless, aside from the two welfare state items, spending on education and health, positions (within cohorts) in the late eighties were discernibly less liberal than when the GSS began in the seventies.

Free speech and religion are the least volatile. Save for a cumulative antipornography trend, the coefficients are sparse, small, and nonevocative.

Gender/sex shows the least movement of any topic in figure 2, but, if we separate the two parts, table 11 suggests liberalization regarding women's roles (positive cumulative *Q*'s of .08 or more for CHLDIDEL, FEWORK, FEPRES, and FEHOME) and conservatism for ABSINGLE, ABHLTH, HOMOSEX, and XMOVIE, although the latter is really curvilinear, possibly reflecting the decline of X-rated film houses followed by the diffusion of X-rated home video.

Race items show a consistently liberal trend throughout the periods. The matter evokes some controversy since many social scientists are loath to think kindly on the racial attitudes of white Americans no matter what they tell interviewers. These results are hardly likely to settle the matter, though before writing them off as "symbolic racism" one should consider that BUSING, RACOPEN, and NATRACE are classic "implementation" (as opposed to "abstract principle") items. The first two show solidly positive trends. The NATRACE item does show a negative *Q* during the great political shift, but one may observe that its value is not out of line with the declines for the nonracial political items. Perhaps one may appeal to both sides by saying there is sufficient undisguised white racism around (in the late 1980s one-quarter of U.S. adults still endorsed miscegenation laws—i.e., were minus on RACMAR) we need not assume an increase in white racism to be unhappy about it.

In sum, the data had (42 × 3) − 2 = 124 chances to show pervasive conservative intracohort shifts during the GSS years, 1972–89. For one topic, attitudes to crime, it came out that way. For the others the trends were either internally mixed (gender), trivial (free speech and religion), first conservative and then liberal (politics), or even thoroughly liberal (race).

The results make two obvious, but nonetheless important, theoretical points. First, there is not much here to support strong hypotheses about aging. Certainly there is no support for the proposition that "we all get more conservative as we age" since the tables are awash with positive signs. In its methodological form, the hypothesis that these are age and not period effects would seem to require a lot more consistency from period to period than we see in these data. Second, there is a real challenge here for the change theorists. Put baldly, since many of these changes go in opposite directions simultaneously, it is doubtful that any single variable ("age of information," "becoming a service society," "waxing and waning of the cold war," "stalled economic growth," etc.) can account for any big chunk of the 42 statistical patterns.

Cohort Replacement

To find the contribution of cohort replacement, I simply subtracted the intracohort shift *Q* from the total change *Q* (App. B). The justification is that if we assume a three-variable system,

Period → Cohort → Dependent Variable.

If we were working with linear regression, total change (period/dependent bivariate) would equal (1) the coefficient for period/dependent net of cohort plus (2) the product of period/cohort and cohort/dependent net of period. The *Q*'s do not add up exactly, but logically any difference between the intracohort *Q* and the bivariate must be due to period/cohort and cohort/dependent (i.e., to a change in cohort composition when cohorts differ on the dependent variable); that is, it must be due to cohort replacement.[9]

Consider our sample item, SPKCOM, from period 1 to period 2. There was a total change of −.015 and an intracohort coefficient of

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[9] Logically, this is just the special case of algebraic decomposition (Firebaugh 1989, pp. 247–51) where there are no interactions. When the assumption is valid, all the various "decompositions" will get the same answers as this simple subtraction because there are no weights for the cohorts. As Firebaugh notes it assigns everything involving nonspanning cohorts to replacement, which does not trouble me as much as it troubles Firebaugh—but I am following his advice to analyze successive small time intervals.

Table 12. Distribution of Cohort Replacement Effects in Appendix B

	P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	P1–P4
N	39	42	42	39
Sign size:				
Positive:				
>.079	9	4	0	29
<.080	25	33	35	7
Zero	4	3	3	1
Negative:				
> −.080	1	2	4	2
< −.079	0	0	0	0
Median	+.057	+.048	+.029	+.130
Mean	+.052	+.044	+.028	+.124
σ	.031	.029	.023	.078

−.080. Subtracting −.080 from −.015 gives +.065. Cohort replacement contributed a liberal boost of +.065, so the total conservative shift was a trivial −.015. In other words, the conversion effect of −.080 was just about canceled out by a replacement effect of +.065. Table 12 summarizes.

These coefficients are (1) almost entirely positive (88 percent of the 162 coefficients in the table); (2) small for adjacent periods (only 13 out of 123 [11 percent] exceed .079);[10] (3) "never" importantly negative (the table has zero negative coefficients of −.080 or stronger); (4) homogeneous in size (standard deviations of .02 to .03). By comparison, the intracohort coefficients were (1) almost evenly split between positive and negative (table 10); (2) occasionally sizable (44 percent are statistically reliable, which generally means a *Q* of .08 or larger; table 10); (3) often importantly negative (table 11); (4) heterogeneous in size (standard deviations from .10 to .16).

I think we have sighted a tortoise and a hare atop the liberal plateau. Cohort effects are the slow and steady tortoise adding tiny amounts

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[10] Since the numbers here reflect products of coefficients or two step paths, not net coefficients for cohort/dependent, simple significance tests are inappropriate. Using .08 as a cutting point, however, makes this part of the analysis comparable to the previous section. Furthermore, in regression analysis of year and cohort, the coefficient for year and year of birth is close to 1.000 in the GSS (interesting in itself, since it challenges the myth of a rapidly aging U.S. population). Since $1 \times X = X$, these effects are probably pretty close to the partial effects of cohort net of year.

Table 13. Correlations among Period-to-Period Changes across Items

	P1–P2 and P2–P3[a]		P2–P3 and P3–P4[b]	
	Conversion	Replacement	Conversion	Replacement
All items	−.36	+.84	+.38	+.79
By topic:				
Crime	−.67	+.96	+.47	+.87
Free speech	+.39	+.86	+.86	+.93
Gender/sex	−.22	+.83	+.83	+.68
Politics	−.49	+.86	+.24	+.84
Race	−.37	+.78	−.09	+.28
Religion	−.76	+.91	−.22	+.93

NOTE.—Conversion refers to the product moment correlation for adjacent conversion (intracohort) *Q*'s; replacement refers to the correlation for adjacent replacement *Q*'s.

[a] $N = 39$.

[b] $N = 42$.

of liberalism year after year, item after item. Intracohort shifts are the erratic hare, bounding hither and yon and occasionally stopping for a snooze.

Correlation analysis (product moment *r*'s with item *Q*'s as cases and periods as variables) confirms the metaphor (see table 13).

The replacement effects show a tortoise-like persistence, with most correlations close to .80. A given item tends to have the same magnitude of cohort effect throughout the periods. The intracohort *Q*'s show a hare-y inconsistency. The negative correlations in the left-hand column say that items that moved in a more conservative direction in the late seventies tended to rebound in a relatively more liberal direction in the early eighties, while the small positive *r*'s in the right-hand column say the shifts during the eighties tended to resemble those at the beginning of the decade.

Since the cohort effects, while small, are consistent across periods, they cumulate so that many items show nontrivial cumulative cohort effects from the early seventies to the late eighties. Table 14 displays them. While all six groups and all but 10 items show definite cohort effects, they are most frequent for free speech, gender, and race and least frequent for politics and religion.

Who won, the steady tortoise or the erratic hare? Table 3 gave away the answer, but figure 3 shows how it worked. On the left side we see the cumulative effects of conversion (black dots, same as in figs. 1 and 2) and replacement (dotted squares). On the right side we see their sum, the raw data (marginal) change.

Table 14. Items with Cumulative (Period 1 to Period 4) Cohort Effects of .08 or Larger

Topic and Item	Cohort Effect	Topic and Item	Cohort Effect
Free speech (na = 1):		Crime (<.08 = 3):	
PORNLAW	.27	GRASS	.21
SPKATH	.18	COURTS	.13
LIBCOM	.18	*M*	+.11
LIBHOMO	.18	Politics (<.08 = 3):	
LIBATH	.16	NATENVIR	.20
SPKHOMO	.14	NATCITY	.17
SPKCOM	.14	POLVIEWS	.17
M	+.18	NATFARE	.12
Gender/sex (<.08 = 2):		COMMUN	.12
XMOVIE	.26	NATEDUC	.08
PREMARSX	.24	*M*	+.09
FEHOME	.19	Religion (<.08 = 2; na = 2):	
FEPRES	.18		
FEWORK	.17	RELITEN	.16
ABHLTH	.11	ATTEND	.13
HOMOSEX	.11	*M*	+.07
M	+.15		
Race:			
RACMAR	.20		
RACOPEN	.14		
BUSING	.13		
NATRACE	.11		
RACSEG	.12		
M	+.15		

For every period and every topic, the replacement effects are positive and similar, so they approximate straight lines. This tells us what we already knew—throughout the seventies and eighties, replacement (dare I say cohort replacement) led to a steady liberalization of attitudes across the variety of topics here.

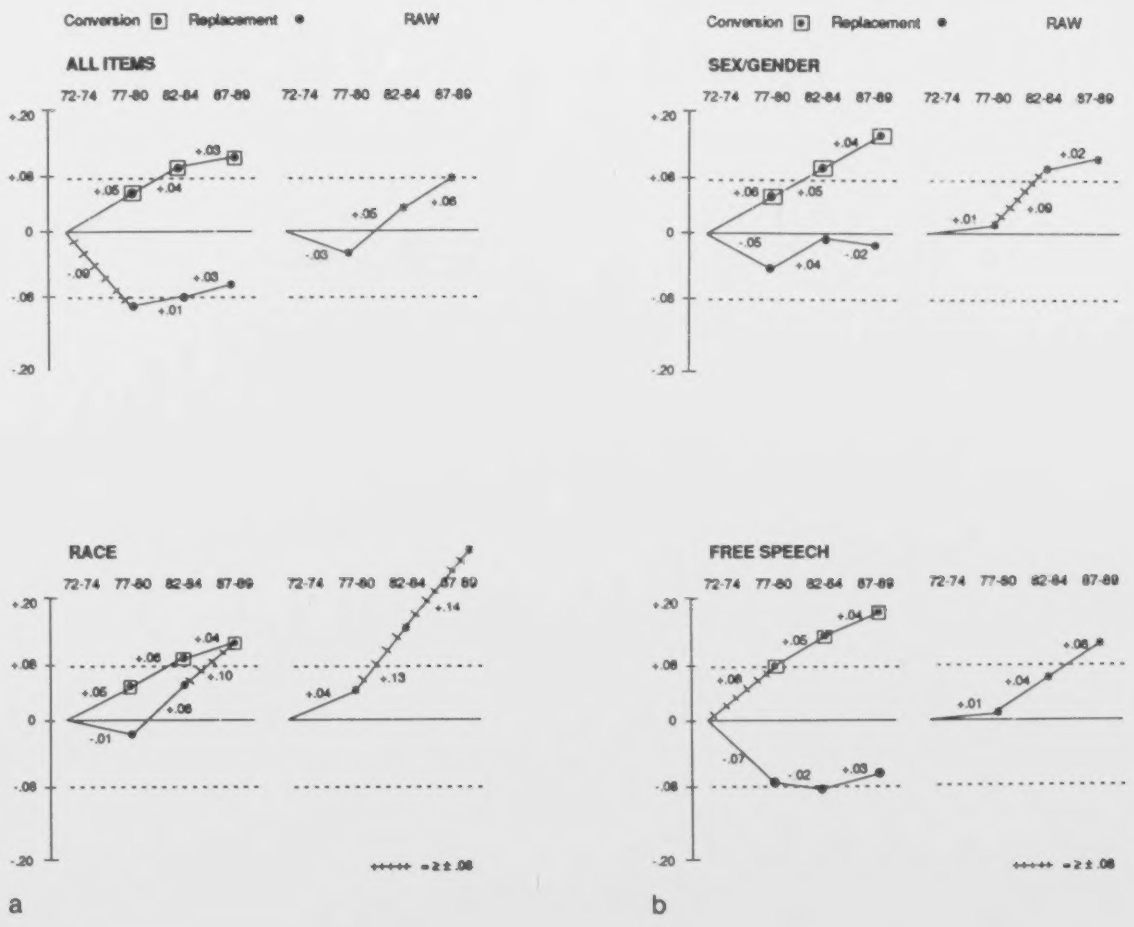
Necessarily then, when the raw data trends differ from the cohort effects, the pattern is due to the conversion effects. Again taking a *Q* magnitude of .08 as notable (though hardly "large"), (1) for the average of all 39 items, the conservative shift of the late seventies barely outweighed the replacement effects, but, in the eighties, the replacement effects offset the tiny conversion effects. By the late 1980s, the average item was "notably" more liberal than in the early 1970s. (2) For race items both effects are cumulatively liberal, producing an impressive gain in liberal attitudes among whites. (3) For gender/sex and free speech the cumulative replacement effects more than offset the wishy-washy conversion effects, so there is a notable liberalization, produced almost entirely by replacement. (4) For politics the U-shaped conversion effects dominate the cohort effects, so the raw data show a conservative shift in the late seventies and an eventual return to the levels of the early seventies. (5) For religion neither process produces much of anything in any of the periods. (6) For crime the cumulative conservative conversion effects easily dominate the weak replacement effects, so the raw data are notably less liberal in the late eighties.

Retiring our racers, let us return to the original geological/meteorological metaphor. On top of the liberal plateau in the seventies and eighties, the weather was changeable: a conservative "cold front" in the late seventies was followed by a liberal "warming trend" in the late eighties. Throughout the period cohort replacement slowly but steadily produced a more liberal ideological climate. The combined result varied with the topic. Overall, there was more liberalization than not. Race, gender/sex, and free speech became more liberal over the 2 decades. Politics and religion showed no cumulative net shift. Attitudes toward crime became more conservative.

The Decline of Cohort Effects

While replacement effects were ubiquitous and cumulatively effective, their magnitudes declined steadily, as shown by their means in table 12: for 1972–74 to 1977–80, +.052; for 1978–80 to 1982–84, +.044; for 1982–84 to 1987–89, +.028. And the declines are pervasive, as shown in table 15. In the first three periods 64 percent of the items showed a smaller replacement effect in P2/P3 than P1/P2, while in the last three 86 percent showed smaller cohort effects in P3/P4 compared to P2/P3.

What happened? Either the amount of cohort replacement declined or the association between cohort and attitude declined. Since cohort replacement is not a single "thing" it is not easy to say whether it is increasing or decreasing. Commonsense indices in table 16 suggest little decrease. Table 16 does show a steady decline in respondents ages 20–24 (as the baby boomers moved through early adulthood). This should lower replacement via "newcomers." But it also shows a steady increase in respondents 80 and over, whose high mortality rates should also add to replacement. Since these demographic trends work


Conversion ⊡ Replacement ●
RAW
ALL ITEMS
SEX/GENDER
RACE
FREE SPEECH
72-74
77-80
82-84
87-89
+.20
+.08
0
-.08
-.20
+.05
+.04
+.03
-.09
+.01
-.03
+.06
+.08
-.05
-.02
+.02
+.09
-.01
+.10
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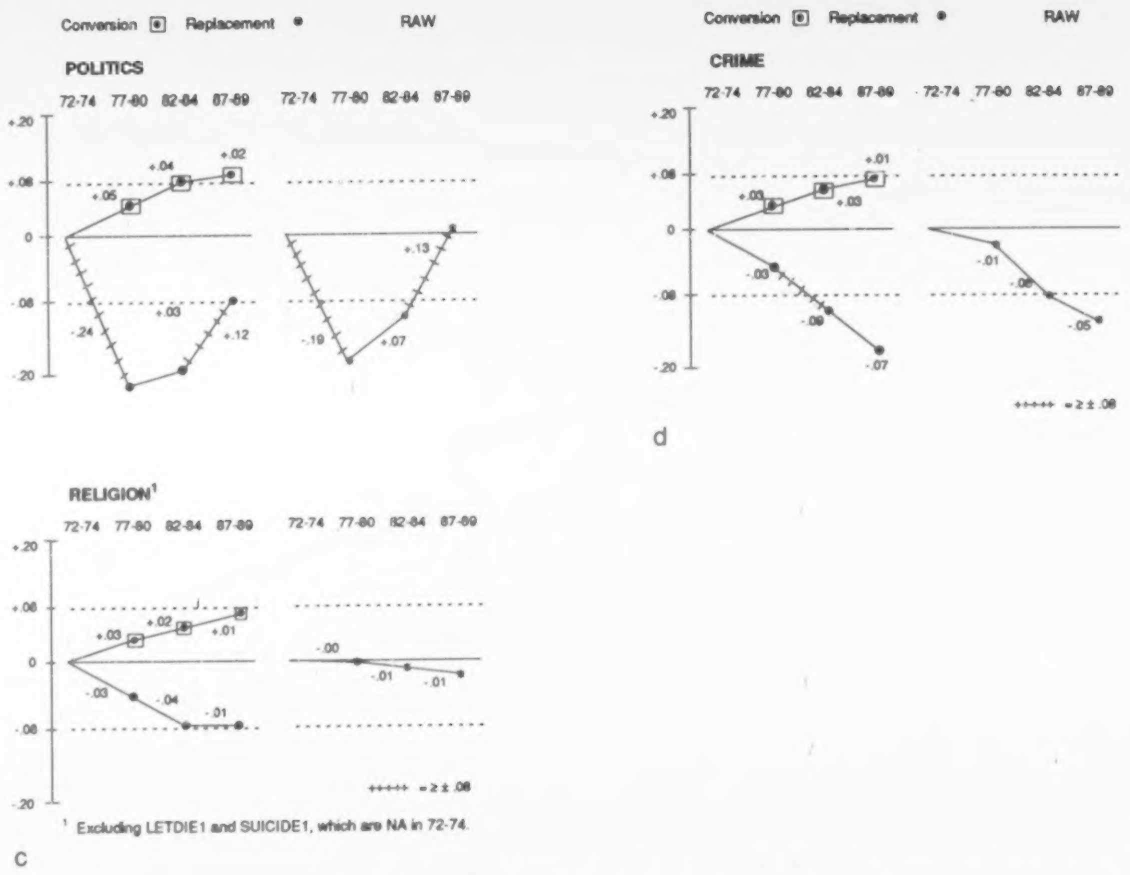
-.07
+++++ = ≥ ± .08
a
b



[1] Excluding LETDIE1 and SUICIDE1, which are NA in 72-74.

Figure 3. Cohort shift disaggregated

Table 15. Changes in Replacement Effects across Items

Cohort Effect	P2 to P3 vs. P1 to P2	P3 to P4 vs. P2 to P3
2d stronger	10	4
Same	4	2
2d weaker[a]	25 (64)	36 (86)
Total items	39	42

[a] Numbers in parentheses are percentages of total items.

Table 16. Percentage of Nonspanning Cohorts in Various Periods

	1972–74	1978–80	1980–84	1987–89
Age 20–24	11.6	11.3	10.4	9.3
Change		–.3	–.9	–1.1
Age 80 and over	1.8	2.6	3.3	3.4
Change		+.8	+.7	+.1

in opposite directions and all the numbers are small, I am unwilling to blame the decline on sluggish demographic turnover.

There is much more striking evidence for change in the shape of the cohort/dependent variable curves. The idea is best conveyed through our example of SPKCOM. To estimate the relationship between cohort and SPKCOM one should control for period effects; otherwise the means from our youngest cohort will come disproportionately from later periods. Table 5 shows a simple way to do this by taking row differences (remembering the no-interaction finding) and assuming the newest cohort (1966) has a score of zero.[11] Figure 4 graphs the results for SPKCOM.

At first glance, the function looks impressively linear: the newer the cohort, the greater the tolerance. But if we divide the cohorts into

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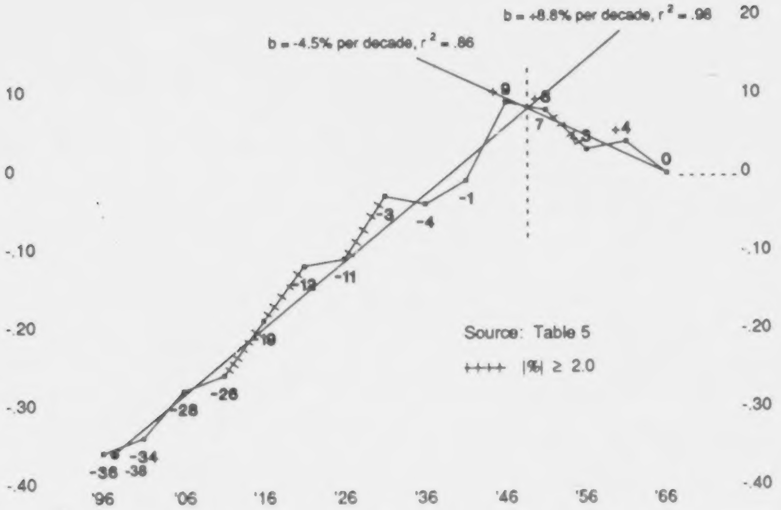
[11] This procedure is consistent with our tabular approach. However, one would get virtually the same results with regression on the raw data, regressing a dummy dependent variable on cohort, controlling for YEAR. When one correlates the two kinds of slopes $r^2 = .943$ and a scatterplot shows no outliers. One implication is that the sizes of various cohorts make little contribution to the slopes.



Source: Table 5

Figure 4. Cohort differences in SPKCOM

1896–1946 and 1946–66 and run separate regressions for each.[12] In the older cohorts, the function is positive ($b = +8.8$ percentage points per decade) and quite straight ($r^2 = .98$) and, in the younger cohorts, the function is negative ($b = -4.5$ percentage points per decade) and quite straight ($r^2 = .86$).

In other words, for cohorts born up to 1946 (or thereabouts) tolerance of communist speech increases with year of birth at the rate of 8.8 percentage points per decade, while for cohorts born after 1946 tolerance decreases with year of birth at the rate of 4.5 percentage points per decade.

Now, let us assume, for the sake of argument, that this "hump" is typical. And let us think of time as a window, less wide than figure 4, moving across the page from left to right as new cohorts enter and older cohorts depart. What would happen? If the GSS had existed before 1972, tolerance (holding constant intracohort changes and assuming no big changes in the age distribution) would have increased about the same amount year after year as the newcomer cohorts were consistently more liberal and the highest mortality cohorts consistently less liberal. But in the GSS years 1972 and after, the increase would slow down since the newcomer cohorts are no longer more tolerant (indeed, they are less tolerant) than their predecessors.

Is SPKCOM an isolated case? No—of 37 items with positive slopes

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[12] One regression will have an *N* of 11, the other an *N* of 5. One seldom takes seriously slopes based on such small numbers, but one seldom has sets of small numbers each of which is based on several thousand cases.

Table 17. Distribution of Slopes for Pre-1946 and Post-1946 Cohorts

	Pre-1946		1946–66
	8 4 2	+10.	
	7 5 4 0	9.	2
	9 8 0	8.	4
	7 1	7.	
	6 5 4	6.	1 2
	9 7 4 2 0	5.	0 2 2
	9 7 7 3	4.	2 5 6
	9 8 4 1	3.	2 2 2 4 4 6
	8 4 3 3 3	2.	1 3 6 6
	8	1.	1 7
	5 3 2	+0.	5
		−0.	1 2 5 7
	7 3 2 1 1	1.	2
		2.	0 4
		3.	7 7 9
		4.	2 5 5 8 9
		5.	
		6.	0
		7.	0 2
		8.	
		9.	
		10.	
		11.	8
Mean	+4.7		+.44
Median	+4.8		+1.4
SD	3.62		4.66
Absolute mean	5.0		3.9
Absolute SD	3.2		2.5

NOTE.—Stem equals integer of slope; leaves equal decimals. For example, the slopes in row 2 from left to right are +9.7, +9.5, +9.4, +9.0, +9.2.

for 1896–1946, 29 or 78 percent had less positive slopes for 1946–66. Table 17 tells the same story another way. For cohorts born prior to 1946 liberalism increases with year of birth at an average rate of about five points per decade across the spectrum of items. For cohorts born after 1946 there is no consistent pattern. The later born are just about as likely to be less liberal as more liberal.

Putting it yet another way, only five of 42 items (NATCITY, GRASS, NATFARE, ATTEND, XMOVIE, BUSING) have post-1946 slopes as positive as the average for all times in the earlier cohorts. Thus we can expect the majority of the item plots to look quite a bit like figure 4. (The coefficients for each item are displayed in App. B.) Figure 5 graphs the results by topic. (1) For all items the curve flattens out after 1946. Post-1941 cohorts are neither systematically more liberal nor systematically more conservative than the pre-1946 respondents. (2) For free speech there is a definite droop. Post-1946 cohorts are generally less favorable to free speech than their predecessors. (3) Gender/sex and politics show the general pattern of a flattening after 1946. (4) Race and religion have positive slopes even after 1946, though they are smaller than the slopes for the pre-1946 respondents. (5) Crime is an exception. Post-1946 cohorts are more liberal.

If it is no longer true that younger cohorts are persistently more liberal than their predecessors, figure 5 displays a sociological discovery of considerable importance. Several authors (Alwin 1987; Condran 1979; Corbett 1988; Duncan 1985; Taylor and Smith 1978) have noted it in passing, but there has been no extended discussion.

Testing the Finding

Virginia Woolf claimed "in or about December, 1910, human character changed." Woolf had no data so she could be very specific, but our data do suggest this: for Americans born after the end of World War II, cohort influence on many of their social attitudes changed. Since cohort replacement is a process through which causes operate, not a cause, the finding is not self-explanatory. Invocation of historical events (the Tet offensive occurred in 1968 when those born in 1946 were 22 years old) is suggestive but proves little. Explanation requires test variables, not "for instances." I have too little space and too few illuminating results to say much, but a few findings may motivate others to pursue the problem.

First, I do not think the finding is an "aging effect limited to the 20–29-year-olds" artifact. It is possible that the very youngest adults become more liberal in their twenties and then settle down. If so, the stability in the later ages might dilute any statistical tests of overall interaction effects. Possibly so, but there is commonsense evidence against it. In period 1 (1972–74) respondents ages 20–29 were consistently more liberal than those 30–39 (92 percent of the *D*'s were positive; the mean was +10.0); in period 4 (1987–89) 59 percent of the *D*'s for respondents in their twenties were positive and the mean is 0.0. This is inconsistent with the "aging effect limited to the 20–29-year-olds" hypothesis.

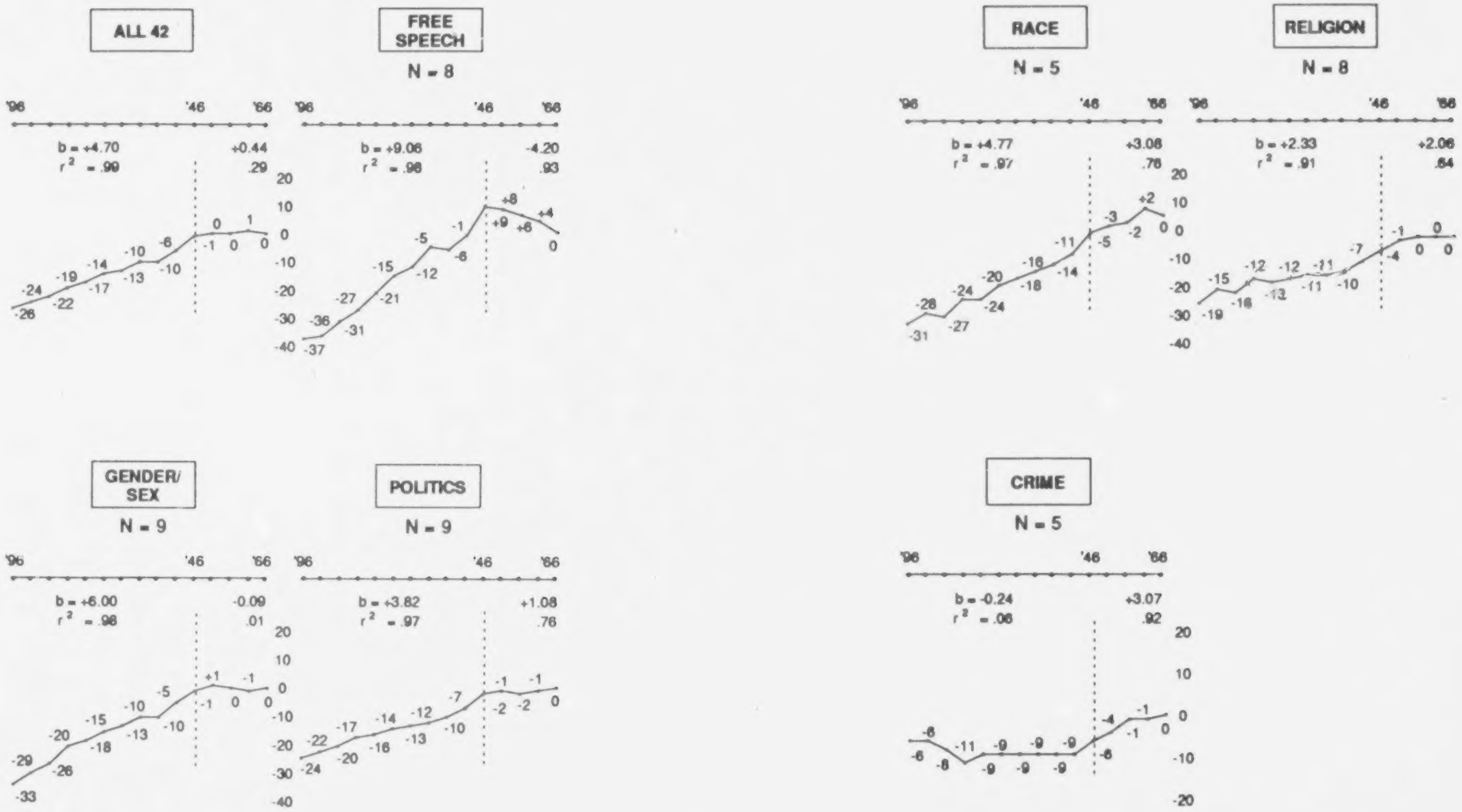

Figure 5. Cohort differences by topic

Table 18. Regression Slopes per Decade in Pre-1946 and Post-1946 Cohorts

Items	*N*	Pre-1946	Post-1946	Difference	Correlation
All	42	+4.31	+.33	−3.98	−.384
Seven ceiling items deleted	35	+3.84	+.17	−3.67	−.478
Education controlled	35	+2.89	+1.12	−1.78	−.225

Second, there is something to the simple hypothesis of ceiling effects. If "liberalization" hit a ceiling with the cohort of 1946, the cohort/liberalism function would flatten out and produce the shape we have seen. There are seven items where a straight line (i.e., projecting the regression in the pre-1946 cohorts) would predict 90 percent or more liberal for the 1966 cohort in period 4. Assuming "real data" never reach 90 percent, we infer these items hit a ceiling: ABHLTH, FEHOME, FEPRES, FEWORK, PREMARSX, RACMAR, and RACSEG.

In the post–World War II generation "nobody," regardless of birth date, accepts gross sexism, racism, or abortion fanaticism. The first two rows of table 18 (above) show the impact of these items. When they are removed the difference in slopes reduces, but only from −3.98 to −3.67.

Educational attainment does have an "aging effect limited to the 20–29-year-olds" pattern. The GSS (and other data sets) show cohorts of young adults increasing their schooling up to around age 30 but not after that. Since education (*a*) shows the same "droop" in its cohort relationship (within a period) as our typical attitude and (*b*) is a powerful and general predictor of attitudes, it is a prime candidate for test variable. The bottom line of table 18 shows what happens when education (years of schooling, 0 through 20) is introduced into the regressions. The liberalism of the "pre-1946 slopes" decreases and the liberalism of the "post-1946 slopes" increases. Necessarily their difference is reduced (from −3.67 to −1.78). Net of education a "decade of pre-1946 cohort" increased liberalism about three points, while a decade of post-1946 cohort increased it only about one point.

One number in table 18 pulls the entire argument together: even after ceiling effect items are removed and the curvilinear effect of age on education is controlled, pre- and post-1946 cohort/attitude slopes are essentially unrelated ($r = -.225$). Yes, Virginia, something happened to social change in or about 1946.

What about the future? Assuming the statistical properties of the system do not change radically in the near future we can predict the following.

1. Cohort replacement will exert a broad and persistent liberalizing effect on American opinions for years to come. While the most recent cohorts are no more liberal than their immediate predecessors, they are more liberal than the generality of American adults. Consider our example, SPKCOM. Among 20–24-year-olds in the late eighties, 67 percent were "liberal," definitely lower than the 73 percent among those ages 35–39. But the overall average (marginal) was 61 percent. Consequently, the arrival of these newcomers had a positive (liberal) effect on the total distribution. There are only three items on which the 20–24-year-olds in 1987–89 were less liberal than the total sample: CHLDIDEL (55 percent vs. 57 percent), NATEDUC (61 percent vs. 65 percent), and SPKRAC (56 percent vs. 63 percent).

2. Period (intracohort) changes will increasingly drive marginal trends. As the magnitudes of the cohort replacement effects decline, their contribution to the total (marginal) trend will decrease, while the relative contribution of period effects will increase. Since the period effects seem to be mixed in sign (both conservative and liberal) and noncumulative, we should see more short-run changes in marginals (not necessarily big ones) and less of an overall liberal cast to them.

Conclusions

In terms of attitude trends: (1) There is no support here for a major conservative shift in Americans' attitudes and opinions. The overall trend is slightly liberal, the intracohort trends are as often liberal as conservative, and even the much-maligned youngest generation is not very conservative. It is merely more liberal (or conservative) than its immediate predecessors. (2) There was a discernible shift to the Right in the late 1970s, apparently led by positions on international affairs (see Stimson 1991). (3) While cohort effects are broadly liberal, intracohort ones are topic specific. Race relations showed a strikingly liberal movement throughout; crime showed a strikingly conservative one. (4) The Stoufferian prediction—liberalization through cohort replacement—fits the 1972–89 facts very well. (5) The data reveal a historic decline in the cohort/liberalism correlation. The decline is only partially accounted for by ceiling effects and the age/education correlation among youngest adults. The broad implication is that the content of the "modernization process" shifted after World War II. The narrow implication is that the impact of Stoufferian cohort replacement will decline but slowly.

In terms of social research, the Stoufferian framework continues to be rewarding, if we do not take it literally (e.g., Stouffer assumed all intracohort shifts were negative and due to aging). Of all the exogenous variables of sociological interest, cohort replacement shows the greatest rate of change in the GSS, and tiny changes in exogenous variables will not explain larger ones in endogenous variables. The wide range of variables showing these effects and the typical inconsistency in sign and size of intracohort and replacement effects mean marginal trends should never be taken at face value, while age/period/cohort (APC) analysis will generally turn up something. Granted, there are methodological problems; commonsense, conservative interpretation and outside information give us protection against totally unwarranted conclusions. Like the notion of causation, the APC framework, while metaphysically shaky, seems to be not only profitable but indispensable when studying attitude trends.

Appendix A

Table A1. Forty-two "Liberal/Conservative" GSS Items

Mnemonic	Question/Page	Content	*N*	P1	P4	Yule's *Q*
ABHLTH	206c/248	(6) Should abortion be legal if mother's health is endangered? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2 = no)	16,252	90	89	−.08
ABSINGLE	206f/249	(6) Should abortion be legal if woman is not married and does not want to marry the man? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2 = no)	15,979	48	42	−.10
ATTEND	105/142	(5) Frequency of attending religious services (+ = 0–4 = monthly or less; − = 5–8 = more than monthly)	17,679	53	57	+.07
BUSING	134A/184	(4) Favor busing Negro/Black and white school children from one district another? (+ = 1 = favor; − = 2 = oppose)	9,380	14	28	+.41
CAPPUN	86/128	(1) Death penalty for murderers (+ = 2, 8 = no, don't know; − = 1 = yes)	14,659	37	28	−.19
CHLDIDEL	211/253	(6) Ideal number of children (+ = 0–2 = < 3; − = 3–8 = more)	10,671	46	57	+.22
COMMUN	101/136	(3) Communist form of government (+ = 2, 3, 4, 8 = other; − = 1 = worst kind of all)	12,095	54	49	−.10
COURTS	90/131	(1) Harshness of local courts (+ = 1, 3 = about right, too harsh; − = 2 = not harsh enough)	15,280	21	14	−.24

FEHOME	198/243	(6) Women should . . . leave running the country up to men (+ = 2 = disagree; − = 1, 8 = agree, not sure)	12,335	62	75	+.30
FEPRES	200/244	(6) Would you vote for a woman for president? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2, 5, 8 = no, don't know, wouldn't vote)	13,907	74	84	+.30
FEWORK	199/243	(6) Approve of a married woman earning money if she has a husband capable of supporting her? (+ = 1 = approve; − = 2, 8 = disapprove, don't know)	9,495	65	78	+.31
FUND	105/142	(5) Fundamentalism/liberalism of respondent's religion (+ = 2, 3 = moderate, liberal; − = 1 = fundamentalist)	17,321	71	68	−.11
GRASS	95/134	(1) Use of marijuana should be made legal? (+ = 1, 8 = should, don't know; − = 2 = should not)	10,769	20	20	.00
HOMOSEX	219/258	(6) Wrongness of homosexuality (+ = 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 = other; − = 1 = always wrong)	12,082	31	27	−.11
LETDIE1	227/262	(5) Euthanasia for a person with an incurable disease? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2 = no)	7,580	na	69	na
LIBATH	79c/124	(2) Favor removing a book against religion from public library? (+ = 2 = not favor; − = 1, 8 = favor, don't know)	13,681	60	66	+.12

Table A1. (*Continued*)

Mnemonic	Question/Page	Content	*N*	P1	P4	Yule's *Q*
LIBCOM	82c/126	(2) Favor removing a Communist's book from public library? (+ = 2 = not favor; − = 1, 8 = favor, don't know)	13,659	56	61	+.09
LIBHOMO	84c/127	(2) Favor removing a homosexual's book from public library? (+ = 2 = not favor; − = 1, 8 = favor, don't know)	12,101	54	60	+.12
NATARMS	69I/106	(3) Spending on the military (+ = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know; − = 1 = too little)	12,704	86	85	−.04
NATCITY	69D/105	(3) Spending on big cities (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,705	49	44	−.10
NATCRIME	69E/105	(3) Halting rising crime rate (+ = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know; − = 1 = too little)	12,690	34	30	−.10
NATDRUG	69F/105	(3) Dealing with drug addiction (+ = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know; − = 1 = too little)	12,690	37	31	−.14
NATEDUC	69G/105	(3) Improving nation's educational system (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,706	50	65	+.30
NATENVIR	69B/104	(3) Improving and protecting the environment (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,706	60	68	+.17

NATFARE	69K/106	(3) Spending on welfare (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,703	21	22	+.04
NATHEAL	69C/104	(3) Spending on health (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,715	63	67	+.10
NATRACE	69H/106	(3) Improving the condition of blacks (+ = 1 = too little; − = 2, 3, 8 = about right, too much, don't know)	12,700	32	34	+.04
PARTYIDb	61/95	(3) Usually think of self as Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what? (+ = 0–2 = Democrat; − = 4–6 = Republican)	15,291	65	56	−.19
POLVIEWSb	68a/102	(3) Where would you place yourself on this scale? (+ = 1–3 = Liberal; − = 4–6 = Conservative)	8,043	50	46	−.09
PORNLAW	217/257	(2) Feelings about pornography laws (+ = 2, 3 = legal for adults, legal for all; − = 1 = illegal)	10,629	57	58	+.03
POSTLIFE	108/144	(5) Believe in life after death? (+ = 2, 8 = no, undecided; − = 1 = yes)	11,235	30	28	−.04
PREMARSX	217/257	(6) Wrongness of sex relations before marriage (+ = 2, 3, 4, 8 = other; − = 1 = always wrong)	10,935	66	73	+.18
RACMAR	125a/177	(4) Laws against marriages between blacks and whites (white respondents only) (+ = 2 = no; − = 1, 8 = yes, don't know)	12,032	61	73	+.26
RACOPEN	128/180	(4) Preference in open housing referendum (white respondents only) (+ = 2 = nondiscrimination; − = 1, 8 = owner decides, don't know)	9,421	34	53	+.30
RACSEG	127b/179	(4) Whites have right to keep blacks out of their neighborhoods (white respondents only) + = 3, 4 = disagree; − = 1, 2, 8 = agree, no opinion)	9,500	55	74	+.39

Table A1. (*Continued*)

Mnemonic	Question/Page	Content	N	P1	P4	Yule's Q
RELITEN	107/144	(5) Would you call your self a _____ (religious preference)? (+ = 2, 3, 8 = not very strong, somewhat strong, don't know; + = none (=4) on RELIG; − = 1 = strong)	14,347	60	62	+.04
SPKATH	79a/123	(2) Allow speech by person against churches and religion? (+ = 1 = yes, allow; − = 2, 8 = no, don't know)	13,698	64	70	+.14
SPKCOM	82a/126	(2) Allow speech by an admitted Communist? (+ = 1 = yes, allow; − = 2, 8 = no, don't know)	13,688	56	61	+.11
SPKHOMO	84a/127	(2) Allow speech by an admitted homosexual? (+ = 1 = yes, allow; − = 2, 8 = no, don't know)	12,111	61	71	+.21
SPKRAC	81A/125	(2) Allow speech by a racist? (+ = 1 = yes, allow; − = 2, 8 = no, don't know)	7,945	na	63	na
SUICIDE1	228A/263	(5) A right to die if incurable disease? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2, 8 = no, don't know)	7,938	na	48	na
XMOVIE	222/260	(6) Seen X-rated movie in the last year? (+ = 1 = yes; − = 2 = no)	10,753	25	26	+.03

NOTE.—Question/Page refers to the question number and page in the 1990 GSS codebook. The number in parentheses in the Content column refers to the question's content classification (1 = crime; 2 = free speech; 3 = politics; 4 = race; 5 = religion; 6 = gender/sex). N = total number of cases analyzed. P1 and P4 refer to the positive percentage in period 1 (1972–74) and period 4 (1987–89), respectively. Yule's Q is for period 4 vs. period 1. na = not available.

Appendix B

Table B1. Results

	Regression Results for Relation with Cohort			Trends in the Items for Various Periods			
Mnemonic	1896–1946 Cohorts	1946–66 Cohorts		P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Overall (P1–P4)
ABHLTH:							
b	+1.82	+1.06	I	.000	.000	−.080	−.080
r^2	.83	.75	II	−.035n	−.055n	−.100*	−.188
			III	+.035	+.055	+.020	+.108
ABSINGLE:							
b	+2.38	−3.74	I	−.025	−.040	−.040	−.105
r^2	.72	.73	II	−.025n	−.050?	−.045n	−.119
			III	.000	+.010	+.005	+.014
ATTEND:							
b	+2.35	+6.16	I	+.045	−.020	+.045	+.070
r^2	.73	.98	II	.000n	−.070*	+.010n	−.060
			III	+.045	−.050	+.035	+.130
BUSING:							
b	+0.48	+9.24	I	+.045	+.110	+.278	+.414
r^2	.14	.96	II	+.010n	+.055n	+.226*	+.287
			III	+.035	+.055	+.052	+.127
CAPPUN:							
b	−1.19	+3.36	I	−.080	−.134	+.025	−.188
r^2	.56	.80	II	−.080*	−.134*	+.025n	−.188
			III	.000	.000	.000	.000
CHLDIDEL:							
b	+5.74	−7.16	I	+.134	+.090	−.005	+.217
r^2	.91	.95	II	+.100*	+.070*	−.020n	+.149
			III	+.034	+.020	+.015	+.068
COMMUN:							
b	+3.43	+3.16	I	−.178	−.095	+.173	−.100
r^2	.83	.99	II	−.226*	−.139*	+.149*	−.217
			III	+.048	+.044	+.024	+.117
COURTS:							
b	+0.17	+4.50	I	−.358	+.045	+.085	−.240
r^2	.03	.94	II	−.426*	−.005n	+.075?	−.367
			III	+.068	+.050	+.010	+.127
FEHOME:							
b	+9.44	+1.72	I	+.010	+.221	+.075	+.300
r^2	.98	.77	II	−.070?	+.178*	.000n	+.100
			III	+.080	+.043	+.075	+.190

Table B1. *(Continued)*

	Regression Results for Relation with Cohort		Trends in the Items for Various Periods				
Mnemonic	1896–1946 Cohorts	1946–66 Cohorts		P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Overall (P1–P4)
FEPRES:							
b	+7.08	−0.50	I	+.119	+.129	+.055	+.296
r^2	.94	.13	II	+.040n	+.085*	−.005n	+.119
			III	+.079	+.044	+.060	+.177
FEWORK:							
b	+9.51	−0.68	I	+.075	+.154	+.090	+.310
r^2	.93	.08	II	+.005n	+.100*	+.040n	+.144
			III	+.070	+.054	+.050	+.166
FUND:							
b	−1.10	−3.88	I	−.040	+.010	−.080	−.110
r^2	.46	.74	II	−.035n	+.025n	−.050?	−.060
			III	−.005	−.015	−.030	−.050
GRASS:							
b	+2.80	+5.22	I	+.264	−.124	−.149	−.005
r^2	.70	.89	II	+.183*	−.202*	−.197*	−.217
			III	+.081	+.078	+.048	+.212
HOMOSEX:							
b	+4.96	−2.02	I	−.020	−.020	−.075	−.114
r^2	.91	.46	II	−.065?	−.065?	−.095*	−.221
			III	+.045	+.045	+.020	+.107
LETDIE1:							
b	+3.88	+3.38	I	na	+.080	+.090	na
r^2	.67	.60	II	na	+.035n	+.055n	na
			III	na	+.045	+.035	na
LIBATH:							
b	+8.85	−4.16	I	+.005	+.050	+.080	+.124
r^2	.97	.95	II	−.080*	−.010n	+.050n	−.040
			III	+.085	+.060	+.030	+.164
LIBCOM:							
b	+9.05	−2.38	I	−.005	+.045	+.050	+.090
r^2	.98	.93	II	−.075*	−.015n	.000n	−.090
			III	+.070	+.060	+.050	+.180
LIBHOMO:							
b	+10.37	−4.50	I	+.045	+.030	+.050	+.124
r^2	.97	.87	II	−.020n	−.030n	+.010n	−.040
			III	+.065	+.060	+.040	+.164

Table B1. *(Continued)*

	Regression Results for Relation with Cohort			Trends in the Items for Various Periods			
Mnemonic	1896–1946 Cohorts	1946–66 Cohorts		P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Overall (P1–P4)
NATARMS:							
b	+2.30	+3.18	I	−.544	+.235	+.319	−.040
r^2	.80	.86	II	−.572*	+.217*	+.305*	−.114
			III	+.028	+.018	+.014	+.074
NATCITY:							
b	+4.32	+5.20	I	−.188	+.055	+.040	−.095
r^2	.95	.83	II	−.245*	−.015n	−.005n	−.264
			III	+.057	−.010	−.005	−.015
NATCRIME:							
b	−1.69	−0.06	I	−.015	−.065	−.025	−.105
r^2	.45	.00	II	−.015n	−.055?	−.020n	−.090
			III	.000	−.010	−.005	−.015
NATDRUG:							
b	−1.29	+2.34	I	+.139	−.045	−.207	−.144
r^2	.62	.58	II	+.139*	−.060*	−.226*	−.149
			III	.000	+.015	+.019	+.035
NATEDUC:							
b	+5.89	−6.96	I	+.020	+.159	+.129	+.300
r^2	.98	.69	II	−.020n	+.119*	+.124*	+.221
			III	+.040	+.040	+.005	+.079
NATENVIR:							
b	+6.63	+4.98	I	−.217	+.075	+.305	+.168
r^2	.95	.86	II	−.310*	.000n	+.278*	−.035
			III	+.093	+.075	+.027	+.203
NATFARE:							
b	+0.29	+6.10	I	−.291	+.287	+.040	+.035
r^2	.14	.98	II	−.350*	+.259*	+.015n	−.085
			III	+.059	+.028	+.025	+.120
NATHEAL:							
b	+4.65	−3.70	I	−.144	+.030	+.217	+.105
r^2	.91	.69	II	−.164*	+.030n	+.221*	+.090
			III	+.020	.000	−.004	+.015
NATRACE:							
b	+2.30	+3.22	I	−.188	+.134	+.100	+.045
r^2	.95	.44	II	−.231*	+.100*	+.075?	−.060
			III	+.043	+.034	+.025	+.105

Table B1. *(Continued)*

Mnemonic	Regression Results for Relation with Cohort: 1896–1946 Cohorts	1946–66 Cohorts		Trends in the Items for Various Periods: P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Overall (P1–P4)
PARTYID:							
b	+3.05	−4.80	I	−.035	−.050	−.105	−.188
r^2	.70	.67	II	−.040n	−.055?	−.100*	−.193
			III	+.005	+.005	−.005	+.065
POLVIEWS:							
b	+3.83	+2.58	I	−.110	−.060	+.080	−.090
r^2	.70	.32	II	−.193*	−.114*	+.045n	−.259
			III	+.083	+.054	+.035	+.169
PORNLAW:							
b	+8.04	+4.64	I	+.005	+.030	.000	+.035
r^2	.91	.98	II	−.100*	−.075*	−.065?	−.235
			III	+.105	+.105	+.065	+.270
POSTLIFE:							
b	−1.06	+3.64	I	−.025	+.025	−.035	−.035
r^2	.53	.93	II	−.055n	+.025n	−.035n	−.065
			III	+.030	.000	.000	+.030
PREMARSX:							
b	+7.68	+2.12	I	+.100	+.055	+.025	+.178
r^2	.96	.33	II	.000n	−.030n	−.035n	−.065
			III	+.100	+.085	+.060	+.243
RACMAR:							
b	+9.67	−0.20	I	+.164	−.015	+.119	+.264
r^2	.99	.01	II	+.100*	−.114*	+.080*	+.065
			III	+.064	+.099	+.039	+.199
RACOPEN:							
b	+4.92	+2.60	I	+.085	+.183	+.119	+.371
r^2	.88	.56	II	+.025n	+.114*	+.090*	+.226
			III	+.060	+.069	+.029	+.145
RACSEG:							
b	+6.50	+0.54	I	+.095	+.221	+.095	+.392
r^2	.96	.02	II	+.045n	+.164*	+.065?	+.268
			III	+.050	+.057	+.030	+.124
RELITEN:							
b	+5.19	+4.22	I	+.040	−.085	+.090	+.045
r^2	.90	.97	II	−.015n	−.139*	+.045?	−.110
			III	+.055	+.054*	+.045	+.155

Table B1. (*Continued*)

	Regression Results for Relation with Cohort			Trends in the Items for Various Periods			
Mnemonic	1896–1946 Cohorts	1946–66 Cohorts		P1–P2	P2–P3	P3–P4	Overall (P1–P4)
SPKATH:							
b	+10.16	−4.92	I	+.005	+.050	+.090	+.144
r^2	.98	.95	II	−.085*	−.005n	+.050n	−.040
			III	+.090	+.055	+.040	+.184
SPKCOM:							
b	+8.82	−4.50	I	−.015	+.050	+.075	+.110
r^2	.98	.86	II	−.080*	+.010n	+.040n	−.030
			III	+.065	+.040	+.035	+.140
SPKHOMO:							
b	+10.77	−5.98	I	+.050	+.065	+.100	+.211
r^2	.96	.96	II	−.020n	+.020n	+.070?	+.070
			III	+.070	+.045	+.030	+.141
SPKRAC:							
b	+6.37	−11.84	I	na	−.015	+.055	na
r^2	.92	.86	II	na	−.025n	+.055n	na
			III	na	+.010	.000	na
SUICIDE1:							
b	+4.70	−1.18	I	na	+.173	+.045	na
r^2	.92	.05	II	na	+.119*	+.025n	na
			III	na	+.054	+.020	na
XMOVIE:							
b	+5.38	+8.38	I	−.287	+.197	+.124	+.030
r^2	.97	.91	II	−3.84*	+.114*	+.050n	−.235
			III	+.097	+.083	+.074	+.256

NOTE.—b = raw slope × 10 for regression of dummy variable on cohort in 5-year categories. See text for explanation. I = bivariate *Q*, period to period; II = net, intracohort *Q*; III = "cohort effect" (I − II); ? = borderline significance; n indicates that $p > .049$ (see n. 1).

* Significance at $p < .05$.

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COMMENT ON DAVIS'S "CHANGEABLE WEATHER IN A COOLING CLIMATE ATOP THE LIBERAL PLATEAU"

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This is a most stimulating article, rich in findings about the dynamics of shifts in national attitudes on matters sociopolitical. The analytic separation of conversion and replacement effects produces an interesting counterpoint, and the remarkable dearth of any noteworthy interaction effects allays at least a substantial part of our concern about the underlying indeterminacy of the age/period/cohort paradigm.

My only motivation for this postscript is to ask what these data mean on the broadest possible canvas—the evolution of liberal/conservative feelings in the American population. It is possible that they mean exactly what the article implies. There are, however, discordant notes within the data themselves that give one pause.

The first discordant note has to do with the fact that the time tracks of these 42 items go every which way from one time period to the next, even in the relatively aggregated assembly of the data being used. The presence of a lot of item movement but very little synchronization of it across items is not a configuration that cries out for some unitary trend descriptor for all 42 items such as "liberal" or "conservative." To be sure, there seems to be somewhat more synchronization if we drop out the two middle periods and look at end point data only (period 1 vs. 4, as in tables 3 and 4). Moreover, the netting out of all this movement, once items are keyed liberal/conservative, does not work out exactly to zero, but goes faintly in a liberal direction. There is nothing wrong with looking at end points in this way: indeed, it is indicated if we are concerned to distill small but true trends of climate from large but short-term blips of weather. And to top matters off, the faintly liberal resultant of all this movement locks in nicely with what is later shown to be a steady cohort replacement pressure in a rather unanimously liberal direction. This is almost a smoking gun.

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Nonetheless, the heterogeneity of change patterns item by item across this grand potpourri of 42 items that returns to view when we look at all four periods in sequence is bound to give us some pause. Even with an end point analysis, it tells us that it would take very little perverse bouncing to produce a contrary net verdict with a new end point in period 5.

This discomfort grows with our second discordant note. I do not intend to quibble with the way in which the 42 items have been keyed in liberal/conservative terms. Quite a number of them I would prefer not to key at all in these terms, but if forced to do so, I think I would end up with the same keying used here. All of this ignores, however, the most indisputable fact about the keying operation, which is that some of the 42 items are much easier to key in these terms than others. If, for example, we were to key the item asking for liberal versus conservative self-identification in the contrary direction, saying that as conservative proportions grew, the population was becoming more liberal, we would deserve to be brought up for scientific fraud. Here the judgment as to which response is liberal and which conservative is ironclad and absolute. This is true of no other item: in every other case some inferential leap based on familiarity with the political and social context is required to decide on a keying. With quite a few items, such as the ideal number of children, the requisite chain of inference is long and intrinsically very arguable.

Knowing that items move over time in idiosyncratic ways, and that some items are more indisputably tied to liberalism/conservatism than others, we are naturally led to ask what trends are visible for the most indisputably relevant items in the stew. Here we find that according to the self-identification item taken alone, increasing proportions of the public have been calling themselves conservative over this time window. This conservative trend is faint, but by end point analysis it is at least as strong as the faint liberal drift ascribed to the 42 items taken together. Moreover, we find the same trend for the parallel self-identification question in the National Election Study (NES) data. In fact, if we lump election studies in a fashion to mimic the periods used here for the General Social Survey (GSS) items, the estimate of the magnitude of the trend toward conservatism, as defined by end point comparisons, is essentially identical. There is one difference in the two data bases: the GSS data on self-identification get from one end point to the other by a circuitous route, whereas the NES data show a very smooth linear trend. Half of the total change between end points occurred between 1972 and 1980, with the other half between 1980 and 1988. The four period means regressed on real time fit a simple linear model very neatly ($r = .95$).

Given what is known about the looseness of fit between ideological categories and concrete issue positions, especially among the less politicized portions of the electorate, there is nothing shocking about the fact that a plausible keying of concrete issues sums up to a net liberal shift over a time period when self-identifications show a straightforward conservative shift. But such a circumstance does prompt a certain amount of reflection as to what these ideological descriptors are supposed to mean. At the very least we must struggle with terminology: not, perhaps, liberal/conservative *tout court*, but a more careful differentiation into what is happening with "professed" or "explicit" liberalism/conservatism versus "implicit" or "inferred" liberalism/conservatism.

It would be still more fun to examine this differentiation empirically with the data at hand. When people are asked to place themselves on a liberal/conservative continuum that has an exact midpoint, this midpoint is routinely the most popular self-location. Other analyses show equally routinely that the mass of respondents at the exact center pay less attention to politics, vote less frequently, and, if the question is asked, are much more likely to report that they do not know what these two ideological terms mean. If we add these midpoint self-locators to the advanced proportions of "don't knows" that the ideological self-location question evokes to begin with, then we are usually dealing with 40 percent or so of a sample, so that we would have an abundance of cases to work with. It would be intriguing to split our samples into true self-locators and the more marginal ones, and then ask how implicit liberalism/conservatism (the other 41 items) behaves in the two strata over the same time period. Unfortunately, we could not do exactly this analysis with the GSS, since its version of the self-location scale offers no exact midpoint, which confuses this issue hopelessly.

Our last discordant note flows from the two preceding. If there were more synchronization of item trends, much of the heat would be taken off the issue of which particular items fell into our global assessment. Given the great heterogeneity of time tracks, the question of item selection assumes towering importance. This is especially true in view of the fact that whereas all issue items are "balanced" in the sense that they offer both pro and con alternatives, at a deeper level some issue domains speak to liberal concerns whereas others speak to conservative ones.

This distinction was brought home to us forcefully in the early days of our national election studies. In every survey from the start we had asked what we considered to be a balanced set of political issue items. The distribution of responses was usually heavily liberal—enough so, in fact, that it appeared the U.S. Congress was quite out of tune with popular opinion, since their legislative record was much less sharply liberal. In 1964 we added a new issue item assessing worry about the power of the federal government. Here for the first time we tapped a strong conservative chord; moreover, this item, to our embarrassment, predicted other things, including voting behavior, at least as well as and normally better than any of our other issues.

The political attitudes sampled by the GSS figuring in this analysis are better balanced in these terms than in our early election studies. Thus, for example, it seems clear that the issue domain of crime is currently very resonant to the conservative side. Some items in the domain of religion have the same resonance. Both of these domains are included in the 42 items, along with the domains of race, gender, and free speech, which instead address liberal concerns.

Yet this balance is only partial. The two conservative issue clusters are represented by 11 items in the total stew, whereas the three liberal clusters are represented by 22 items. (We set aside the politics domain, since items like partisanship and ideological self-location are more truly balanced internally.) Does this twofold imbalance matter? We cannot be sure, but it is a bit disconcerting to note that the batching of items in table 4 is very neatly by liberal/conservative resonance. It seems that items in the liberal domains show end point changes that trend toward liberalism, whereas responses to more conservative issues are trending toward conservatism. If this is true, then the preponderance of liberal issues has to matter, and if it were redressed, it is not clear that the observed faint liberal trend overall would survive. It might even be reversed.

It would not be hard to redress the balance. Not only could the crime and religion items be increased but other issues dear to conservatives could be broached. One missing favorite here, in addition to the power of the federal government, is patriotism. Liberals see this as a silly nonissue, but for many conservatives it is the most persistently gripping political issue of them all. It is worth remembering that conservatives see many of the favorite liberal issues as equally silly.

These discordant notes combine to leave me uncomfortable with the rhetoric of the broadest trend assessments in this otherwise fine article. Happily, most of what the article is about, including the persistent asymmetric effects of cohort replacement, comes through unscathed by these doubts, and the contribution is an important one.

COMMENT ON DAVIS
YES, BUT . . . PUBLIC OPINION IS A *TOP-DOWN* PROCESS

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This commentary is not a direct reponse to the main findings of Davis's "Changeable Weather." Rather, its purpose is to examine these findings in an alternative context in order to frame a different set of questions and suggest some important implications. For in addition to meticulously documenting the opinions and attitudes held by the general public over a 20-year period, the Davis article allows for a number of important observations to be made about the definition and study of what is commonly termed "public opinion," and about the relationship between public opinion and public policy.

Public Opinion from the Plateau

While there are a number of conclusions that may be drawn from Davis's article, at a very basic level one certainly would be safe in concluding that the basic character of public opinion changed very little during the 1970s and 1980s. The data show tremendous stability in the main, with changes in specific indicators averaging just a few percentage points per decade. Moreover, even some of the differences that turn out to be statistically significant, owing to a large sample size, may be legitimately questioned as to whether they are substantively significant.

This assessment of great stability in the distribution of opinion is quite consistent with earlier studies (Ladd 1978; Paletz and Entman 1981; Smith 1990). Davis's work is noteworthy for the extensiveness and range of his analysis and for its methodological sophistication and sensitivity. While not diminishing the contribution made in teasing out the countervailing trends in conversion and replacement, we should not lose sight of a central fact: standing atop the plateau, the tempera-

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ture of public opinion—even considering adjustments for changes in the "weather" and "climate"—was remarkably constant during the entire period. That is, there was tremendous aggregate stability in public opinion during the 1970s and 1980s.[1]

Public Policy from the Plateau

There is another vantage point from the plateau, this looking out on changes in public policy over the same time frame. And, as we turn our attention from "what the public thought" to "what the government did," we see a vastly different landscape. The 1980s were a period of profound change to the Right in virtually every area of public policy. While the historical record is far from complete,[2] even a partial listing makes a persuasive case.

> In economic and monetary policy we witnessed a move to "supply side economics." The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 shifted the burden from corporations to individuals, brought down the top tax rate, and gave relief of approximately $3.00 to the lowest fifth of the income strata and of almost $2,500 to the top fifth (Ferguson and Rogers 1986).
>
> In regulatory policy we witnessed massive deregulation (including the savings and loan industry); relaxed antitrust laws; reduced enforcement of OSHA, EPA standards, and civil rights, among others; and proposals to privatize national resources.
>
> In social policy we witnessed a fundamental reordering of priorities encompassing large cuts in social programs (including food stamps, AFDC, job training), and a 40 percent increase in "real dollar" military spending between 1980 and 1985.
>
> This period also witnessed the rise of the "moral majority," an attack on abortion as a fundamental right and affirmative action as a policy goal, and a clear move to the Right in the composition of the Supreme Court (with the elevation of Rehnquist to chief justice and the addition of Justices O'Connor, Scalia, and Kennedy).

Not only did American public policy move to the Right, it may also be argued that these fundamental changes were largely accomplished by policymakers claiming to be acting in response to the perception of public opinion (Hertsgaard 1988; Smith 1988). In sum, while there was a general perception that public opinion had changed (Entman and Paletz 1980; Ladd 1978),[3] and while there was in fact large-scale policy change, there was in fact no underlying change in the values, beliefs, or opinions of the citizenry. This disjuncture is quite disquieting. The main reason that public opinion is accorded so much importance is that it should, in a liberal democracy, serve as a guide to the course of public policy.

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[1] There is one exception to this as Davis notes, "The *crime* items are the only group to fit the popular impression of a thoroughgoing conservative shift" (p. 281).

[2] For recent treatments in this area see, among others, Edsall and Edsall (1991); Ferguson and Rogers (1986); Phillips (1990).

Questions and Implications

The stability in public opinion coupled with the changes in policy lead to a Hobson's choice of questions: Is what we measure on surveys not really public opinion? Or, is public opinion unrelated to public policy? Thus the Davis article, in this context, begs absolutely fundamental questions concerning how public opinion is defined, what role it plays in policy-making, and how it should be studied.

Perhaps the best place to start in answering these questions is with V. O. Key, whose classic work of 3 decades ago remains as illuminating as ever. Key, in *Public Opinion and American Democracy*, struggles through a first chapter trying to define public opinion, noting with some exasperation that "to speak with precision of public opinion is a task not unlike coming to grips with the holy ghost" (1961, p. 8). Finally, after rejecting a number of alternatives, Key concludes that public opinion can perhaps best be thought of as "those opinions held by private persons which government finds it prudent to heed" (1961, p. 14)

Key's definition reminds us of a crucial realization: it is the policymaker, not the public, who is the central actor in the linkage between opinion and policy. And, flowing from this, the opinion-policy relationship can be more profitably examined as a "top-down" rather than as a "bottom-up" process.

If we begin with this assertion a number of important implications logically follow. While this is not the forum to develop a model fully, some basic tenets can be laid out. First, there is no "true" single entity called public opinion. As I noted a decade ago, what public opinion is (or is thought to be) rests largely in the hands of those organizing the discussion of it (Zukin 1981, p. 366). Instead, there are a variety of forms of "potential public opinion" that simultaneously coexist at any single point in time, each of which carries a different interpretation of public opinion. These forms would include—from the policymaker's point of view—but are not limited to polls and surveys, media content, election results, group activity, and even "personal politics," focusing on the cues decision makers receive from letters and people around them they have come to trust.[4] In this top-down vision, policymakers use a sympathetic form or interpretation of public opinion to pursue already-preferred policies.

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[3] Writing well before Reagan's election, Ladd (1978) noted, "It must be acknowledged that many observers of the American scene *think* the country 'is moving right,' and more than a few political leaders are *acting* as though it were. This in itself is enormously consequential" (p. 33).

Thus, in addition to its significant contribution in describing the nature and character of the American public over 2 decades, the Davis article also broadens the charge to those of us who study the role of public opinion in politics by reminding us that "survey results are not necessarily public opinion." It reminds those exploring the relationship between opinion and policy that it might be best to start with the policymaker instead of the public and to consider that public opinion might indeed be many things at once.

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[4] A variant of this approach may be found in Nimmo (1978), who speaks of "group," "popular," and "mass" opinion.

THE POLLS: POLL TRENDS

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS AND THE TELEVANGELIST SCANDALS OF 1987–1988

TOM W. SMITH

In 1987 and 1988 televangelism in particular and American Protestantism in general were rocked by a series of sex and financial scandals and several lesser controversies (see App. A). These troubles involved several of the leading television preachers and received extensive coverage in the media.[1] In the most serious incidents, Jim Bakker of the PTL was caught in sex and hush money improprieties and later convicted of financial fraud for his mishandling of the PTL empire. Likewise, Jimmy Swaggart was exposed as hiring prostitutes for pornographic purposes and was eventually defrocked by the Assemblies of God. Less serious controversies swirled around Oral Roberts for linking his fund-raising efforts to being "called home" by God and Pat Robertson over allegations that he lied about his date of marriage and war record and for various statements made during his unsuccessful presidential campaign.[2]

To assess the impact of these scandals on the public, we searched for survey time series that measured religious beliefs and behaviors before, during, and after the televangelist scandals. This would, of course, allow us to estimate the impact of the scandals on these religious topics. Altogether we located 31 adult time series and 13 time series among youths. We grouped these time series into topics about television evangelists (A), viewing/contributing to the electronic church (B), evaluations of the clergy (C), organized religion (D), the role of religion in general (E), standard religious beliefs (F), Fundamen-

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This research was done for the General Social Survey project directed by James A. Davis and Tom W. Smith. The project is funded by the National Science Foundation, grant SES-8718467.

[1] See the *Time* and *Newsweek* coverage cited in the references for examples (Brand 1987; Hackett 1988; Hull 1987; Martz 1987; Ostling 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1989; Time 1988a, 1988b; Watson 1987a, 1987b; Woodward 1987, 1988).

[2] On the electronic church in general, see Be kser (1989); Frankl (1987); Gaddy and Pritchard (1985); and Horsfield (1984).

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talist religious beliefs (G), standard religious behaviors (H), Fundamentalist religious behaviors (I), and religious preference (J).

Among adults 15 time series showed an effect, 3 are uncertain, and 13 did not show an effect. Among youths 5 show an effect, 3 are uncertain, and 5 did not show an effect.[3] Effects were particularly common for questions dealing with television evangelists (5 of 5) and evaluations of the clergy and organized religion (3 or 4 of 5). For example, ratings of television evangelists as trustworthy fell from 41 percent in 1980, to 23 percent in 1987 (after the first scandals broke), to 16 percent in 1989 near the end of the disclosures. Similarly, the percent with a "great deal" of confidence in the leaders of "organized religion" fell from 30 percent in early 1987 before the Bakker scandal to 21 percent in 1988 after the Bakker disclosures and during the Swaggart exposé (and those with "hardly any" confidence rose from 19 percent to 32 percent). Also showing a clear scandal effect were the general measures on religious influence. The percent saying that the influence of religion was increasing fell from 48 percent in 1985 and 1986 to 36 percent in 1987 and 33 percent in 1988. Among youths the percent saying that religion should have more influence dropped from 38 percent in 1986 to 32 percent in 1987.

But unexpectedly, standard religious behaviors (e.g., attending church and praying) were also generally affected (5–6 of 7). While more moderate than the swings in the televangelist, clergy, and organized religion areas, standard religious activity seems to have been affected. For example, church membership dipped from 69 percent in 1986 and 1987 to 65 percent in 1988, and the percent praying daily fell from 58 percent in 1985 to 53 percent in 1989.

Conversely, measures of the electronic church audience showed little effect (1 of 4). Unfortunately, the scarcity of data points makes it difficult to study closely this apparent lack of impact. Since the scandals drove two major televangelists off the air, caused at least short-term declines in the TV ratings of religious shows not even associated with the scandals (Ostling 1987), and at the start of the scandals led people to indicate that they would view religous shows less because of the scandals,[4] it is possible that our measures are inadequate to reveal the true trend.

Standard and Fundamentalist beliefs, Fundamentalist behaviors, and religious preference also showed relatively few effects (4–5 of 16), and most effects were small. For example, belief in the inerrancy of the Bible ranged between 35 and 38 percent in 1984–87 and fell to 34 percent in 1988 and 31 percent in 1989 (an all-time low).

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[3] Formal statistical tests of whether a time series shows a scandal effect are presented in Smith (1991).

[4] Surveys by CBS, LAT, and Roper in late March 1987 all indicated that people expected to watch or contribute less to the television religion than previously. Details available from the author.

Year-to-year changes indicate much greater than average drops in religious response between 1986–87 (for youths) and 1987–88 (for adults). Across 12 adult items the average change was −0.68 percent in 1985–86, −0.48 percent in 1986–87, −2.53 percent in 1987–88, −0.78 percent in 1988–89, and +0.63 percent in 1989–90. For eight youth items the average change was −.045 percent in 1985–86, −2.5 percent in 1986–87, −0.2 percent in 1987–88, +0.5 percent in 1988–98, and −0.5 percent in 1989–90.[5] The adult average shows a rebound in 1990 and the youth average no further decline across 1989 and 1990.

The televangelist scandals of the late 1980s did lead to negative reactions to religion. The reputation of televangelists worsened, and various evaluations of clergy and organized religion also suffered. Several measures of standard religious behaviors also showed similar, but smaller, negative shifts.

Measures of televangelist audiences and of Fundamentalist beliefs, behaviors, and preferences showed a comparatively small impact from the scandals. While the limited nature of the audience data may prevent the detection of scandal effects, the lack of a widespread impact among the Fundamentalism measures clearly indicates that the scandals did not have an especially strong impact in this theological area. Non-Fundamentalist beliefs, religious preference, and some general religion measures also showed relatively minor impacts.

Even for those items affected by the religious scandals, there is some evidence that the effect was often short-lived rather than permanent. For about a third of the negative effects there were signs of a rebound by 1990.

Appendix A

A Summary of Televangelist Scandals and Controversies, 1987–89

January–April 1987: Roberts "call me home" fund-raising controversy
March 19, 1987: Bakker admits to adultery; resigns from PTL
May 4, 1987: Bakker dismissed as minister by the Assemblies of God
June 12, 1987: PTL declares bankruptcy
October 5, 1987: Robertson admits having lied about his marriage date to cover up premarital conception of child
January–February 1988: Various of Robertson's religious and political positions and claims come under critical attack

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[5] For more details on these year-to-year changes, see Smith (1991).

February 21, 1988: Swaggart admits to pornographic activities; resigns ministry

March 8, 1988: Robertson drops libel suit against Congressman McCloskey, who had charged that Robertson used political influence to avoid combat assignment during Korean War

April 8, 1988: Swaggart defrocked by the Assemblies of God

December 5, 1988: Bakker indicted for financial fraud

September 13, 1989: Roberts announces closing of City of Faith Hospital and Medical Center and sale of other buildings to meet deficit

October 5, 1989: Bakker convicted of financial fraud

Appendix B
Abbreviations

ABC/WP: American Broadcasting Company/*Washington Post*
AF: American Freshmen
AP: Associated Press
CBS: Columbia Broadcasting System
CBS/NYT: Columbia Broadcasting System/*New York Times*
Gallup: Gallup Organization
Gallup-Teens: Gallup Youth Survey
GSS: General Social Survey, NORC
LAT: *Los Angeles Times*
MTF: Monitoring the Future, SRC
NBC: National Broadcasting Corporation
NORC: National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago
PRRC: Princeton Religion Research Center
Roper: Roper Organization
SRC: Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
T/YSW: *Time*/Yankelovich, Skelley, and White
YSW: Yankelovich, Skelley, and White

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Religious Trends, Adults

A. TELEVISION EVANGELISTS

1. *Gallup:* I am going to read you some pairs of opposite phrases that have been used to describe television evangelists and ministers. From each pair of opposites, would you select the term you feel best describes television evangelists or ministers in general: *(a)* Trustworthy with Money/Not Trustworthy with Money; *(b)* Honest/Dishonest; *(c)* Sincere/Insincere; *(d)* Have Special Relationship with God/No Special Relationship with God; *(e)* Care about People/Don't Care.

Trustworthy with Money (Yes)

	%	*N*
1980	41	. . .
April 1987	23	1,571
September 1989	16	1,238

Honest (Yes)

	%	*N*
1980	53	. . .
April 1987	34	1,571
September 1989	23	1,238

Sincere (Yes)		
1980	56	. . .
April 1987	34	1,571
September 1989	26	1,238
Have Special Relationship with God (Yes)		
1980	47	. . .
April 1987	30	1,571
September 1989	23	1,238
Care about People (Yes)		
1980	59	. . .
April 1987	48	1,571
September 1989	33	1,238

B. ELECTRONIC CHURCH AUDIENCE

1. *Harris:* Do you belong to or attend in person, watch on television, listen on radio, or receive literature from any evangelical church or preacher?

View Televangelists (Yes)

	%	*N*
September 1980	15	1,492
December 1988–January 1989	15	4,050

2. *Gallup:* About how much time per week, in hours and minutes, do you normally spend watching religious shows on television?

Viewing Religious Shows (None)

	%	*N*
November 1978	72	1,533
March 1988	71	1,481

3. *Gallup:* Do you ever watch religious programs on television?

Ever View Religious Shows (No)

	%	*N*
December 1981	57	1,483
January 1982	55	1,484
1983	58	1,571
April 1987	51	1,571
September 1989	51	1,238

4. *Gallup:* By any chance, have you contributed money to any television evangelists in the last 12 months?

Contribute to, Last 12 Months (Yes)

	%	*N*
April 1987	4	1,571
September 1989	5	1,238

C. EVALUATIONS OF THE CLERGY

1. *Gallup:* How would you rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in these different fields . . . clergy/clergymen?

Honest Clergy (Honest + Very Honest)

	%	N
July 1977	63	1,516
July 1981	63	1,564
May 1983	64	1,534
May 1985 (NBC)	55	1,597
July 1985	67	1,536
September 1985 (Roper)	61	1,003
September 1988	60[a]	1,030
February 1990	55	1,228

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[a] Princeton Religion Research Center (PRRC) (1988) lists an earlier 1988 point with 66 percent, but PRRC (1990a, 1990b) and the Roper Center's POLL database omit this point.

2. *Occupational Prestige of Clergy (NORC):* Social Standing of Clergy (Ministers, Priests, and Rabbis) on NORC's Occupational Prestige Scales (see Nakao and Treas 1990).

Occupational Prestige of Clergy

	Mean
1964–65	69
March 1989	69

D. ORGANIZED RELIGION

1. *Gallup:* I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little? The church or organized religion.

Confidence in Religion (Great Deal)

	%	N
May 1973	43	1,531
May 1975	44	1,626
January 1977	38	1,500
April 1978	35	1,523
April 1979	40	1,509
October 1980	44	1,593
November 1981	40	1,508
May 1983	39	1,497
May 1985	42	1,528
July 1986	34	1,539
October 1986	36	1,539
July 1987	35	1,607
September 1988	35	1,030
September 1989	28	1,238
August 1990	33	1,241

2. *GSS:* I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you had a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them? Organized religion.

Confidence in Religion (Great Deal)

	%	*N*
March 1973	36.1	1,442
March 1974	45.2	1,450
March 1975	26.0	1,390
March 1976	32.7	1,397
March 1977	41.4	1,475
March 1978	31.9	1,468
March 1980	36.7	1,409
March 1982	33.1	1,453
March 1983	29.4	1,532
March 1984	32.2	945
March 1986	26.0	1,417
March 1987	29.7	1,416
March 1988	20.6	967
March 1989	22.4	995
March 1990	23.7	857

E. ROLE OF RELIGION IN GENERAL

1. *Gallup:* Do you believe that religion can answer all or most of today's problems, or that religion is largely old-fashioned and out of date?

Religion the Answer (Yes)

	%	*N*
March 1957	81.8	1,606
December 1974	61.0	1,517
January 1981	64.4	1,609
December 1982	60	1,509
July 1984	56	1,579
March 1985	61	1,571
November 1985	58	1,008
July 1986	65	2,405
September 1986 (LAT)	58	978
June 1990	63	1,236

2. *Gallup:* At the present time, do you think religion as a whole is increasing its influence on American life or losing its influence?

Influence of Religion (Increasing)

	%	*N*
March 1957	69.2	1,621
February 1962	44.5	2,984
February 1965	33.1	3,497
March 1967	23.5	3,522
April 1968	18.5	1,504
January 1969	14.0	1,476
January 1970	13.8	1,508

December 1974	31	1,517
December 1975	39	1,538
December 1976	44.5	1,559
December 1977	37	1,518
December 1978	37	1,552
April 1980	35.8	1,549
December 1981	38	1,483
December 1982	41	1,509
October 1983	44	1,549
July 1984	42	1,579
March 1985	48	1,571
November 1985	45	1,008
September 1986	48	978
March 1988	36	. . .
April 1989	33	1,007
June 1990	33	1,236
November 1990 (AP)	39	1,006

3. *Gallup:* How important would you say religion is in your own life—very important, fairly important, or not very important?

Importance of Religion (Very Important)

	%	*N*
June–July 1952	75	2,987
November 1965	70	4,731
April 1978	52.7	1,523
August 1980	55	1,538
August 1980	57	1,600
November 1980	56	1,551
December 1980	53	1,549
May 1981	55	1,519
September 1981	58	1,540
December 1981	54	1,483
April 1982	54	1,589
August 1982	57	1,519
November 1982	56	1,540
December 1982	56	1,509
June 1983	55	1,558
September 1983	57	1,533
September 1983	57	1,574
November 1983	53	1,540
February 1984	57.7	1,610
March 1984	56	1,514
June 1984	57	1,516
August 1984	55	1,585
September 1984	54	1,518
October 1984	55	1,520
December 1984 (CBS/NYT)	64	1,009
January 1985	54	1,522
January 1985	54	1,528
April 1985	54	1,525
July 1985	56	1,536
August 1985	62	1,564

October 1985	58	1,540
March 1986	58	1,004
April 1986	55	1,552
July 1986	55	1,539
September 1986	55	978
October 1986	53	1,559
January 1987 (T/YSW)	60	1,014
January 1987	55	1,562
April 1987	54	1,571
July 1987	53	1,607
August 1987 (CBS/NYT)	57	1,480
1987	52	. . .
1988	54	. . .
September 1989	57	1,238
1990	55	. . .
June 1990	58	1,236

F. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, STANDARD

1. *GSS:* Do you believe there is a life after death?

Afterlife (Believe In)	%	*N*
November 1944 (Gallup)	75.8	2,528
1952 (Gallup)[a]	77	2,987
March 1957 (Gallup)[b]	74.5	1,618
February 1960 (Gallup)[b]	73.7	2,977
1961 (Gallup)[c]	74	. . .
November 1965 (Gallup)[a]	75	2,783
June 1968 (Gallup)	73.2	1,536
March 1973	69.9	1,504
March 1975	67.2	1,488
1975 (Gallup)[c]	69	1,500
March 1976	71.6	1,498
February 1978 (Gallup)[c]	62	1,553
March 1978	69.9	1,529
April–May 1978 (Gallup)	71.8	1,523
March 1980	73.3	1,462
1980 (Gallup)[d]	67	. . .
1981 (Gallup)[c]	71	1,729
March 1983	68.1	1,595
March 1984	73.4	1,463
March 1986	76.1	1,467
March 1986 (ABC/WP)[c]	78	1,148
July 1986 (LAT)[d]	73	2,405
March 1987	72.2	1,459
March 1988 (Gallup)[f]	71	2,556
March 1988	73.6	1,480
1988 (Gallup)[g]	68	750
March 1989	68.7	1,005
March 1990	70.0	919
June 1990 (Gallup)[c]	71	1,236

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[a] Do you think your soul will live after death?
[b] Do you believe there is, or is not, a life after death?
[c] Do you believe in life after death?
[d] Do you believe in life after death, or not?
[e] What, if any, of the following do you believe in? Life after death.
[f] Do you believe there is life after death?
[g] Do you believe there is life after death, or not?

2. *Gallup:* Do you believe in God or a Universal Spirit?

God/Universal Spirit (Believe In)

	%	*N*
1977	94	1,014
November 1978	94	1,533
July 1985 (LAT)	96	2,405
December 1988	95	750

G. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, FUNDAMENTALIST

1. *SRC:* Here are four statements about the Bible, and I'd like you to tell me which is closest to your own view. (*a*) The Bible is God's Word and all it says is true. (*b*) The Bible was written by men inspired by God, but it contains some human error. (*c*) The Bible is a good book because it was written by wise men, but God had nothing to do with it. (*d*) The Bible was written by men who lived so long ago that it is worth very little today.

Bible Inerrancy (Yes)

	%	*N*
Fall 1964	51	1,450
Fall 1968	52	1,538
Fall 1980	46	1,394
March 1984 (GSS)	46	479
Fall 1984	46	1,902
March 1985 (GSS)	48	770
March 1987 (GSS)	44	489
Fall 1988	48	1,761

2. *Gallup:* Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? (*a*) The Bible is the actual word of God and it is to be taken literally, word for word. (*b*) The Bible is the inspired word of God, but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word. (*c*) The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by men.

Bible Inerrancy-Gallup (Yes)

	%	*N*
1963[a]	65	. . .
August 1976	37	1,553
April–May 1978	37	1,523
August 1980	39	1,538
December 1981[a]	37	1,483
1983[a]	37	1,540
March 1984 (GSS)	38	976
October 1984	37	1,590
October 1984[b]	37	4,831

November 1984	40	1,509
1984	38	. . .
March 1985 (GSS)	36	746
March 1986 (ABC/WP)[c]	35	1,148
March 1987 (GSS)	37	955
August 1987 (LAT)	37	2,040
March 1988 (GSS)	34	1,478
March 1989 (GSS)	31	997
March 1990 (GSS)	32	920

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[a] "Perceptions" instead of "precepts."
[b] Registered voters.
[c] "More perceptions" instead of "moral precepts."

H. RELIGIOUS BEHAVIORS, STANDARD

1. *GSS:* How often do you attend religious services?

Church Attendance (Weekly)

	%	*N*
October 1964 (NORC)	16.8	1,970
March 1972	29.1	1,600
March 1973	34.4	1,495
March 1974	34.4	1,481
March 1975	34.2	1,487
March 1976	35.7	1,492
March 1977	35.7	1,521
March 1978	37.7	1,527
March 1980	34.6	1,461
March 1982	36.9	1,495
March 1983	35.2	1,595
March 1984	32.2	1,460
March 1985	35.5	1,530
March 1986	33.7	1,466
March 1987	32.7	1,454
March 1988	26.1	1,478
March 1989	29.6	1,533
March 1990	30.0	1,333

2. *Gallup:* Did you, yourself, happen to attend church or synagogue in the last seven days? (Based on published figures averaging across surveys.)

Church Attendance (Last 7 Days)

	%
1972	40
1979	40
1981	41
1982	41
1983	40
1985	42
1987	40
1988	42
1989	43

3. *Gallup:* Do you happen to be a member of a church or synagogue? (Based on published figures averaging across surveys.) *GSS:* Are you, yourself, a members of a church or synagogue?

Church Member (Yes)

	%	*N*
1976	71	
1979	68	
1980	69	
1981	68	
1982	67	
1983	69	
1984	68	
1985	71	
1986	69	
1987	69	
1988	65	
March 1988 (GSS)	61	1.481
1989	69	
1990	69	

4. *GSS:* About how often do you pray?

Praying (Daily)

	%	*N*
March 1984	57.4	1.447
March 1985	58.2	1.510
March 1987	56.4	1.438
March 1988	54.3	1.468
March 1989	52.7	994
March 1990	52.3	901

I. RELIGIOUS BEHAVIORS, FUNDAMENTALIST

1. *Gallup:* Would you describe yourself as a born-again or evangelical Christian, or not?

Self-Identified Born-again (Yes)

	%	*N*
July 1986	32	2.517
August 1986	38	978
October 1986	30	1.559
January 1987	30	1.562
March 1987	36	1.015
April 1987	27	1.571
April 1987	33	1.009
July 1987	26	1.607
May 1988	28	3.021
September 1989	34	1.238
June 1990	38	467
September 1990	37	1.060

2. *Gallup:* Would you say that you have been "born again" or have had a "born-again" experience—that is, a turning point in your life when you committed yourself to Christ?

Been Born Again (Yes)

	%	*N*
August 1976	35	1,553
April 1978[a]	37	1,523
December 1979	39	1,522
August 1980	39	1,538
August 1980	38	1,600
December 1981	36	1,483
May 1983	33	1,540
September 1984	40	1,590
October 1984 (YSW)[b]	34	1,014
October 1984 (LAT)[c]	38	4,831
November 1984	35	1,509
December 1984 (YSW)[b]	38	1,024
July 1985 (YSW)[b]	36	1,013
July 1986 (LAT)[d]	42	2,405
August 1987 (LAT)[e]	43	2,040
March 1988 (GSS)	37	1,481

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[a] . . . That is, an identifiable turning point in your life?

[b] . . . That is, a religious experience which has been a turning point in your life? Registered voters.

[c] . . . Committed yourself to Jesus Christ? Asked of Christians only. Registered voters.

[d] Wording c, but all not restricted to registered voters.

[e] Wording c, but asked of all adults.

3. *Gallup:* Have you ever tried to encourage someone to believe in Jesus Christ or to accept Him as his or her Savior?

Proselytizing (Have Done)

	%	*N*
August 1976	47	1,553
August 1980	45	1,538
August 1980	45	1,600
May 1983	47	1,540
September 1984[a]	48	1,590
October 1984 (LAT)[b]	53	4,831
November 1984[a]	46	1,509
July 1986[c]	51	2,405
August 1987[d]	52	2,040
February 1988[a]	46	1,481

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[a] . . . To accept Jesus Christ. . . .

[b] . . . As their Savior? Asked of Christians only. Registered voters.

[c] Wording B, asked of all adults.

[d] Wording B, asked of Christians only.

J. RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

1. *GSS:* What is your religious preference? Is it Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other religion, or no religion? If Protestant: What specific denomination is that, if any? *SRC:* Is your religious preference Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, or something else? If Protestant: What Church or denomination is that?

Religious Preference—GSS (Fundamentalist)

	%	*N*
March 1984	34.1	1,433
March 1985	33.7	1,497
March 1986	35.1	1,428
March 1987	35.8	1,417
March 1988	35.4	1,426
March 1989	33.0	1,491
March 1990	30.3	1,316

Religious Preference—SRC (Fundamentalist)

October 1972	18.8	2,695
October 1974	20.5	2,500
October 1976	18.2	2,867
October 1978	19.1	2,285
October 1980	18.9	1,583
October 1982	20.9	1,402
October 1984	18.0	2,237
October 1986	20.5	2,153
October 1988	22.8	2,026

Religious Preference—GSS (None)

March 1972	5.2	1,608
March 1973	6.4	1,500
March 1974	6.8	1,483
March 1975	7.6	1,488
March 1976	7.6	1,497
March 1977	6.1	1,523
March 1978	7.8	1,528
March 1980	7.2	1,465
March 1982	7.3	1,498
March 1983	7.3	1,595
March 1984	7.3	1,461
March 1985	7.1	1,529
March 1986	6.7	1,467
March 1987	7.1	1,460
March 1988	8.0	1,480
March 1989	7.8	1,533
March 1990	8.0	1,367

Religious Preference—SRC (None)

October 1978	8.7	2,285
October 1980	9.0	1,583
October 1982	8.8	1,402
October 1984	8.2	2,237
October 1986	8.4	2,153
October 1988	8.7	2,026

Religious Trends, Youths

C. EVALUATIONS OF THE CLERGY

1. *MTF*:[6] Now we'd like you to make some ratings of how honest and moral the people are who run the following organizations. To what extent are there problems of dishonesty and immorality in the leadership of . . . churches and religious organizations? (Not at All; Slight; Moderate; Considerable; Great; No Opinion)

Dishonesty/Immorality of Church Leaders
(Not at All + Slight)

	%	*N*
1975	51.9	2,872
1976	55.7	2,704
1977	53.1	2,804
1978	52.8	3,345
1979	55.1	2,975
1980	53.1	2,984
1981	54.9	3,300
1982	53.0	3,296
1983	51.2	3,089
1984	43.9	2,981
1985	45.0	3,004
1986	43.8	2,882
1987	36.6	3,007
1988	32.7	3,011
1989	36.8	2,648

D. ORGANIZED RELIGION

1. *MTF*: Now we'd like you to make some ratings of how good or bad a job you feel each of the following organizations is doing for the country as a whole. For each one, mark the circle that best describes how you feel. How good or bad a job is being done for the country as a whole by . . . churches and religious organizations. (Very Poor; Poor; Fair; Good; Very Good; No Opinion)

Job Done by Churches
(Very Good + Good)

	%	*N*
1975	56.0	2,902
1976	55.3	2,972
1977	56.0	3,098
1978	56.4	3,733
1979	57.8	3,258
1980	61.1	3,256
1981	59.6	3,601
1982	57.3	3,648
1983	56.6	3,333
1984	56.3	3,243

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[6] The MTF is a sample of high school seniors conducted by the SRC during the spring of each school year (Johnston, Bachman, and O'Malley 1986).

1985	55.1	3,238
1986	54.8	3,123
1987	48.4	3,314
1988	47.4	3,330
1989	47.3	2,811
1990	47.0	2,578

E. ROLE OF RELIGION IN GENERAL

1. *MTF:* Some people think that there ought to be changes in the amount of influence and power that certain organizations have in our society. Do you think the following organizations should have more influence, less influence, or about the same amount of influence as they have now? Churches and religious organizations. (Much Less; Less; Same as Now; More; Much More; No Opinion)

Influence of Churches
(Much More + More)

	%	*N*
1975	49.3	2,925
1976	44.2	2,946
1977	45.0	3,097
1978	44.3	3,701
1979	44.3	3,259
1980	45.4	3,208
1981	44.1	3,596
1982	41.7	3,628
1983	41.2	3,279
1984	42.8	3,230
1985	37.3	3,225
1986	38.0	3,075
1987	32.4	3,318
1988	33.4	3,293
1989	36.3	2,817
1990	36.6	2,576

2. *MTF:* How important is religion in your life? (Not at All; A Little Important; Pretty Important; Very Important)

Importance of Religion in Your Life
(Very Important)

	%	*N*
1976	28.8	14,572
1977	27.9	15,266
1978	27.8	18,155
1979	30.1	16,046
1980	32.4	15,884
1981	30.5	17,673
1982	28.4	17,675
1983	27.3	16,365
1984	29.7	15,970
1985	27.3	15,951
1986	26.3	15,219

1987	24.9	16,222
1988	26.1	16,203
1989	27.1	16,675
1990	26.4	15,193

F. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, STANDARD

1. *Gallup-Teens:*[7] Do you believe in life after death, or not?

Afterlife (Believe In)

	%	N
August–November 1985	66	502
1989	65	. . .

2. *Gallup-Teens:* Do you believe in God or a universal spirit?

God/Universal Spirit (Believe In)

	%	N
August–November 1985	96	502
1989	95	. . .

3. *Gallup-Teens:* Do you believe that this God or universal spirit observes your actions and rewards or punishes you for them?

Watching/Rewarding God (Believe In)

	%	N
August–November 1985	75	502
1989	77	. . .

H. RELIGIOUS BEHAVIORS, STANDARD

1. *MTF:* How often do you attend religious services? (Never; Rarely; Once or Twice a Month; About Once a Week or More)

Church Attendance (Weekly)

	%	N
1976	40.7	14,589
1977	39.6	15,285
1978	39.4	18,204
1979	40.7	16,072
1980	43.1	15,904
1981	40.0	17,699
1982	37.3	17,700
1983	39.1	16,386
1984	37.7	15,978
1985	35.3	15,970
1986	34.3	15,225
1987	31.8	16,235
1988	31.9	16,232
1989	31.4	16,697
1990	30.4	15,201

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[7] The Gallup Teen Surveys are samples of 13–17-year-olds (Bezilla 1988).

2. *AF:*[8] For the activities below, indicate which ones you did during the *past year*. If you engaged in an activity frequently, mark (F). If you engaged in an activity one or more times, but not frequently, mark (O) (occasionally). Mark (N) (not at all) if you have not performed the activity during the last year.

	Church Attendance (Frequently + Occasionally)
	%
1968	91.0
1969	89.2
1970	87.6
1971	86.0
1978	85.5
1979	84.7
1981	85.9
1982	85.9
1983	85.3
1984	84.4
1985	84.9
1986	83.2
1987	83.4
1988	[illegible]
1989	[illegible]
1990	83.0

3. *MTF:* If you have at least an average income in the future, how likely is it that you will contribute money to the following organizations? If you have already contributed, mark the last circle only. Are you likely to contribute to . . . church or religious organizations? (Definitely Not; Probably Not; Don't Know; Probably Will; Definitely Will; Already Have)

	Contributions to Churches (Already Have + Definitely Will)	
	%	*N*
1975	49.8	2,879
1976	46.9	2,938
1977	48.9	3,060
1978	48.0	3,700
1979	50.4	3,247
1980	49.1	3,242
1981	48.8	3,595
1982	48.2	3,561
1983	47.2	3,282
1984	47.7	3,242
1985	42.4	3,220
1986	44.1	3,020
1987	41.5	3,316
1988	41.1	3,271
1989	41.4	2,791
1990	40.7	2,555

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[8] The AF is a sample of first-year college students. Data are collected in the fall. *N*'s are generally over 100,000 (Astin, Green, and Korn 1987).

I. RELIGIOUS BEHAVIORS, FUNDAMENTALIST

1. *AF:* Are you a born-again Christian?

	Born-again Christian (Yes)	
	%	*N*
1981	26.3	15,219
1985	23.9	16,222
1988	22.7	16,203
1989	24.7	16,675
1990	29.3	15,193

J. RELIGIOUS PREFERENCE

1. *MTF:* What is your religious preference? (Baptist, Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Church, Other Protestant, Unitarian, Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, Latter Day Saints, Other Religion, None)

	Religious Preference (None)	
	%	*N*
1976	11.4	14,444
1977	10.4	15,153
1978	9.7	17,990
1979	8.9	15,919
1980	8.9	15,750
1981	9.3	17,561
1982	9.5	17,544
1983	9.3	16,231
1984	10.3	15,821
1985	11.5	15,803
1986	11.9	15,055
1987	13.3	16,507
1988	12.6	16,093
1989	13.4	16,546
1990	15.2	15,043

2. *AF:* [Your] current religious preference? Mark one in each column. (Baptist, Buddhist, Congregational [United Church of Christ], Eastern Orthodox, Episcopalian, Islamic, Jewish, Latter Day Saints [Mormons], Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Quaker [Society of Friends], Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Other Protestant, Other Religion, None—list varies from year to year)

	Religious Preference—AF (None)
	%
1966	6.9
1967	7.9
1968	9.6
1969	13.2
1970	9.8
1971	14.4
1972	14.3

1973	10.1
1974	10.5
1975	10.3
1976	10.0
1977	8.5
1978	7.6
1979	8.0
1980	8.1
1981	7.3
1982	7.3
1983	7.6
1984	8.0
1985	8.4
1986	10.0
1987	10.1
1988	11.6
1989	11.3
1990	11.8